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OLD
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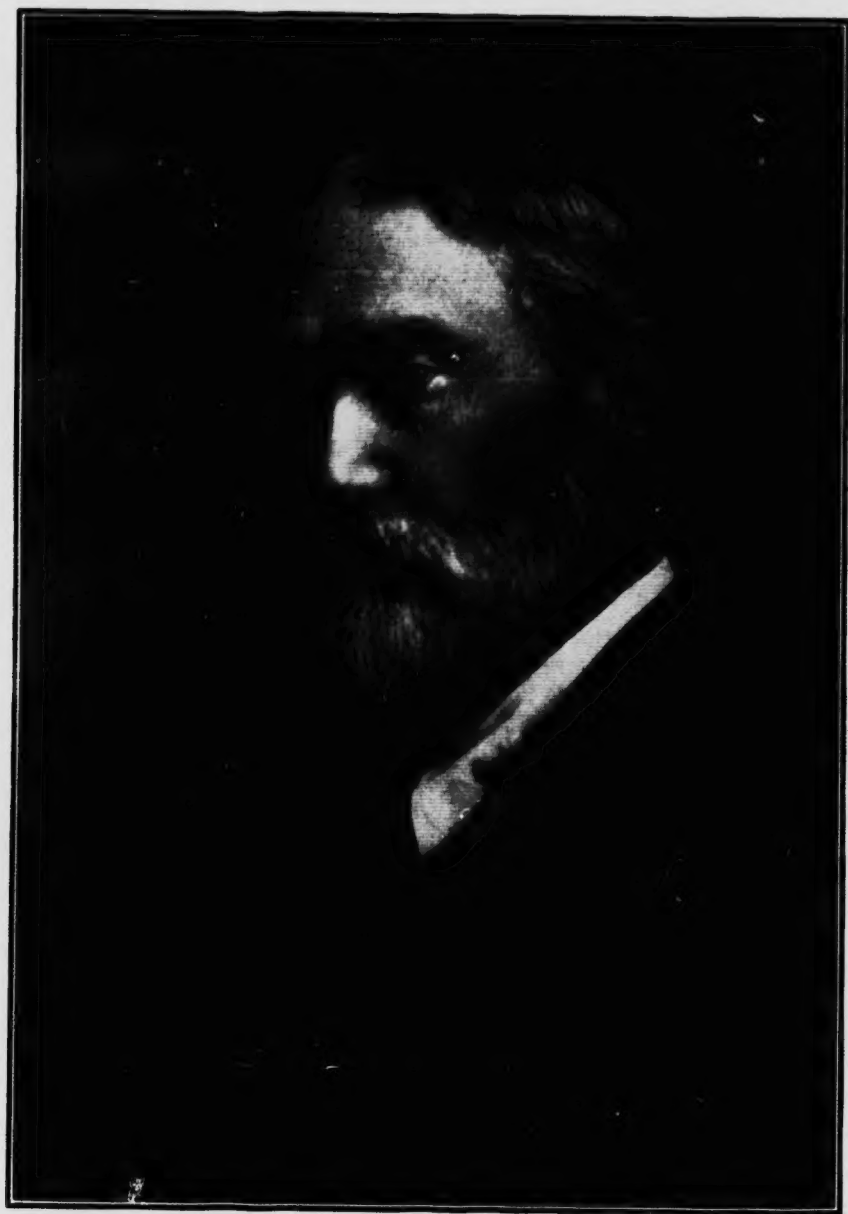
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William Marshall

BROOKFIELD

AND OTHER VERSE

BY

WILLIAM E. MARSHALL

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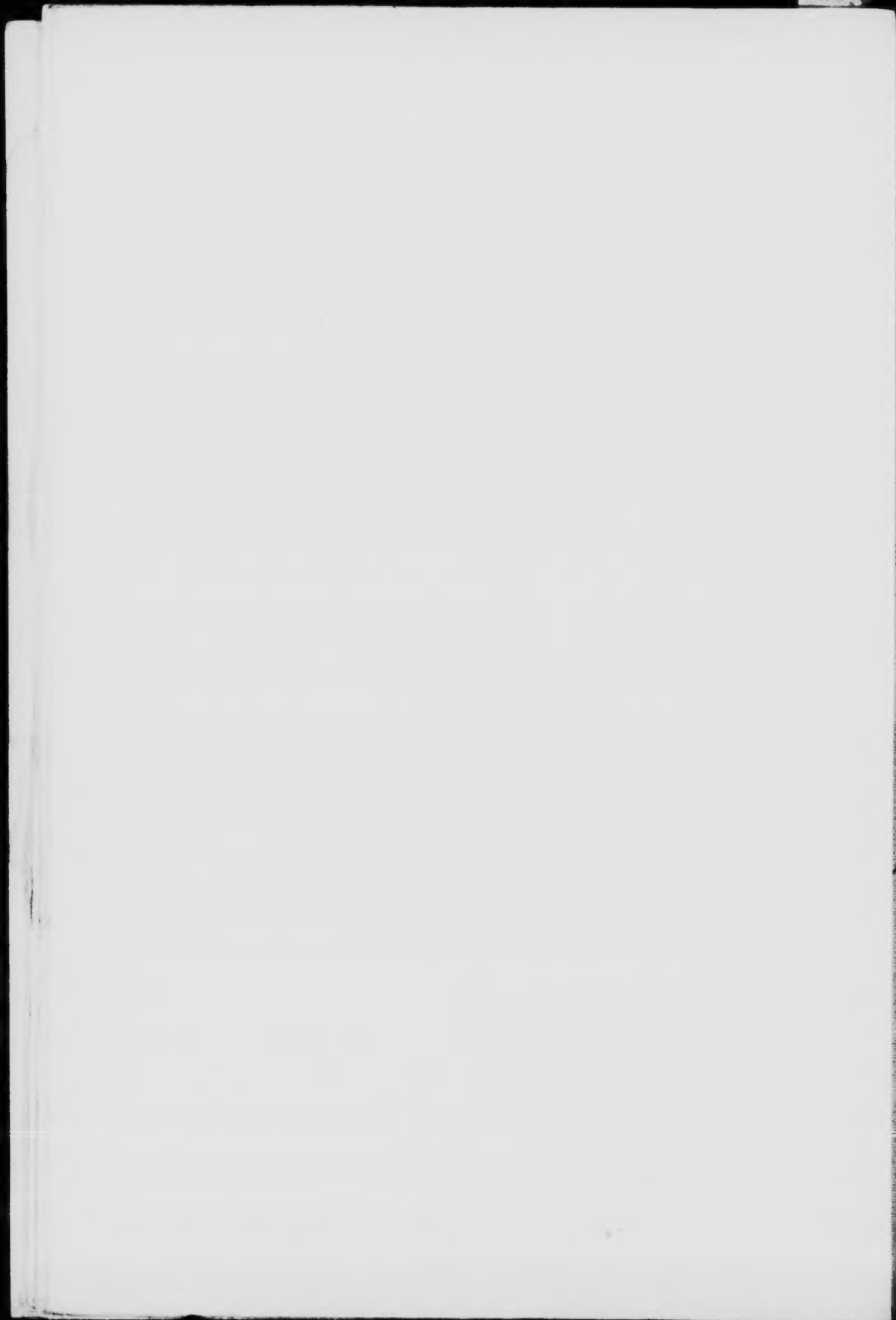
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TO
MY WIFE AND
MY CHILDREN, THESE
GIFTS OF THE
SPIRIT



PREFACE

Besides "BROOKFIELD" and other verse—written, with two exceptions, since 1909—all the verse I had printed in Bridgewater ten years ago is included in this book. I am, of course, quite conscious of the defects in my verses; still, for the sake of their preservation a while longer—because they represent wholesome hours to me—it is a pleasure to have them in this form. I have added an appendix of necessarily brief, explanatory notes. My thanks are due to "The University Magazine" for permission to reprint "BROOKFIELD" and two sonnets, "The Bust of Cicero" and "The Vagrant."

W. E. M.

*Bridgewater, Nova Scotia,
October 1, 1919.*

"What I aspired to be
And was not, comforts me."

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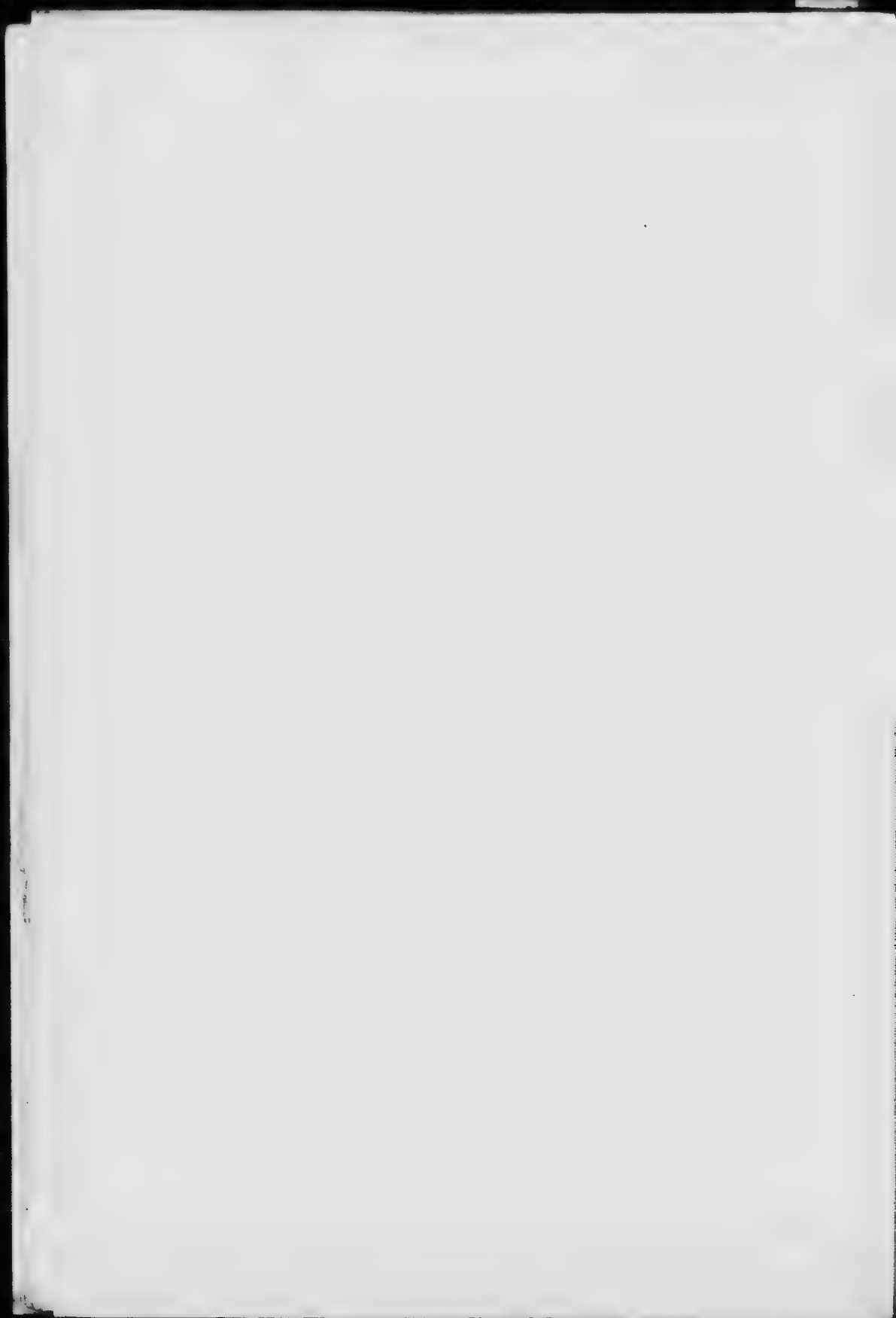
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I

BROOKFIELD

with five memorial sonnets, and one to a brother

I know these slopes; who knows them if not I?

Matthew Arnold's "Thyrsis"

BROOKFIELD

In commemoration of Robert Randall MacLeod,

1841-1909

NOW hath a wonder lit the saddened eyes
Long misted by a grievous winter clime;
And now the dull heart leaps with love's surprise,
And sings its joy. For 'tis the happy time;
And all the brooding earth is full of chime;
And all the hosts of sleepers under ground
Have burst out suddenly in glorious prime;
And all the airy spirits now have found
Their wonted shrines with life and love entwined 'round.

BROOKFIELD

And now I no more sorrow for the dead;
The friend I love hath pain of death no more,
He hath mortality forever shed;
He is of happiness the spirit's core.
And my heart's memory brims, yea, runneth o'er,
With lavish bounty of his teeming worth;
(What times he did his garnered wealth outpour,
In wisdom's word and deed and pleasure's mirth)
Wherefore my soul hath joy in life's great freedom-birth.

And so, I mount the richest sunset hill,
Singing the wandering echo of a fame
That shall forever have its roaming will
In love-awakened hearts where dwells the name
Of him whose genius, burning to high flame,
Was reared within these woods with spark divine.
Brookfield ! Thy beauty slept, until he came
To wake thee up to visions that were thine
Hadst thou but dreamed what lay beyond the rule and line.

BROOKFIELD

Hadst thou but dreamed ! Ah, dreamers 'neath the blue
Of day, the dreamers in the starry night,
Pillowed on stone and kissed by sun and dew !
On ye, the ardours of the Infinite
Descend in wingèd raptures, and the light
Of Heav'n stirreth to bliss each mortal pain,
Wide opening dreaming eyes in spirit sight !—
Alas ! how many waken up again,
Singing their ecstasy unto the wind and rain.

Behold, one cometh in the spirit now !—
A wraith of tender, melancholy song—
The once familiar friend of bird, and bough,
And flower, and brook, and meadow. Not for long
He wandered with the meagre, vagrant throng
Of shepherds piping in the early day.
Death mocked his young heart-ease; and soon among
Forgotten things a woeful shepherd lay:
And soon the melody grew faint and died away.

BROOKFIELD

On yonder hill, close to a great high road,
Made by the pioneers from sea to sea,
The Poet lay, unheeded;—and the load
Upon his broken heart sank heavily
With cattle's tread, and withered grew the tree
That bent o'er him, and dwindled to a path
The great highway that was so wide and free;—
Only a chance-hewn stone of poorest worth
Clung like a widowed love to his dead, buried earth.

We know his fellow shepherds cried to Heaven,
And thrilled the winds with their melodious loss;
And, doubtless, some late-straying sheep were driven,
By that rude, wailing music's urge, to cross
The moonlit stream and crop the golden moss;
And evermore were changed from sheep to man,
And evermore cared not for worldly dross,
And evermore heard call of Spring, and ran
Into the joyous woods to follow after Pan.

BROOKFIELD

And He, our freedom's guide, our Spirit's friend,
Had more than loving word for that lone grave,
Where homing neighbour never came to lend
It presence. His warm heart was moved to save,
From utter, last neglect, a name that gave
Thine grace of life in songs now little read,
Since other ease of heart we most do crave.

Dear Friend ! Whose love our weak remembrance fed,
Thou gav'st our silent bard a home among the dead.

Among the mounds of love—no more alone—
With charity of marble at his head,
And, clinging to his feet, that poor, chance stone,
Now, in the churchyard, rests the long-lost dead.
What though his coming was unheralded
With pomp and praise, he hath his meed of earth;
And on his grave the flowers he loved are spread,
And many a kindly eye will read his worth,
And sometimes there the heart of love be poured forth.

BROOKFIELD

Lo ! now, another comes to swell the praise:
He bringeth far-off memory of the sea,
And of the pathless woods' alluring maze,
And of the ringing axe, and crashing tree,
And first log hut, and brush fire setting free
The age-imprisoned soil to ease the needs
That crown the pioneer's hard destiny.
Haply, the warring world no braver breeds,
Than he who turns a forest into waving meads.

Yet still we sing: *Saul hath his thousands slain,
And David tens of thousands !* As of old,
We make great holiday of bloodiest gain,
And wreathe the shining victor's head with gold,
And bless his gory trophies, and unfold
Them in Love's sacred temple, and outpour
Loud gratitude to God—that didst uphold
Our hands to kill our brother man in war.
Ah ! Christ is dead,—and we the Roman Guard adore.

BROOKFIELD

But see this happy village festival,
Where all the country folk are gathered round
Responsive to the clear, vibrating call
Of one uplifted voice,—whose echoes sound
Above the hill-tops now. This toil-won ground
Is holy; here the burning bush flamed high
One hundred years ago, when faith was crowned
In the first settler's log hut built near by,
And love in that rude home was blessed with children's cry.

Not that the Venturer grew rich or great,
Or seemed a hero, or was honoured more
By those who followed him to conquer fate
In the far wilderness; nor that he bore
Himself as one who paid for other's score;
But that among the forest immigrants,
He was the first life-bringer to explore
These hills, where the shy Indian had his haunts,
And prove the settler's worth, beyond the body's wants.

BROOKFIELD

And it was well the body's wants were few,
To those who made the homes here—day by day
Toiling and sweating while they hacked and slew
The forest, burned the brush, and cleared away
For garden patch and grain, and flax and hay,—
But ah ! the wives in rudest suffering strong !
Little of rest there was for such as they,
Little save care, ev'n in the baby song
They crooned, in midst of work for all the household throng.

And yet they were not sad—these pioneers:
(Tales have been told of humour all their own,
And of their wit that crackled unawares,
And of their sturdy way, and look, and tone,
And high assurance when their work was done.)
Surely, for them, the thrush at evening sang,
The Pleiades and great Orion shone,
And the life-giving sun in splendour sprang,
And the glad harvest moon her golden lamp did hang.

BROOKFIELD

Long years ago, they went to take their rest
Beneath the spreading trees on yonder hill—
The field they cleared to use at God's behest,
And where the quiet tenants of his will
Are undisturbed of any joy or ill.
And here and there, white stones with carven name
Tell who lies covered up, forever still:
But the First Settler has a shaft of flame
Reared by the villagers unto his worth and fame.

Since then the years have flown, flown like the wind
That passeth o'er this hill, laden with life.
This is the hill where I was sure to find
My friend in days of old. Here, I am rife
In freedom—not from the surcease of strife
Of God with man (Lord, Lord, cease not with me !)
But from the bloodless Fate with hidden knife,
Shearing the heart aspiring to be free
Of lust and greed and self, whate'er the prize may be.

BROOKFIELD

*I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills,
Whence cometh help! My help is in the Lord!*
Behold, O man, what is it that He wills
Of thee! But to do justice in accord,
And to love mercy better than the sword,
And to walk humbly in the sight of Him:
Thus, is the olden vision still outpoured
Upon the hills, for all whose eyes are dim
With seeking in the places where the bale-fires swim.

Thus, am I in the spirit with my friend,
Here in the village which he glorified;
And unto which his heart would always wend,—
Impatient of the world of human tide—
When Spring began to call him to her side
With robin's song and the arbutus trail,
And all the lure of freedom undenied,
And all the wistful life of hill and dale,
And river, lake, and stream, and love that would not fail.

BROOKFIELD

And as he roamed the shores and woods and clears,—
Seeking, for aye, the bloom of yesterdays—
The mayflowers smiled and lent their sweetest airs,
And violets curtsied from the road-side ways;
The red-veined slippers of the elves and fays
Were hanging near the rose and eglantine,
And mystic trilliums still did heavenward gaze;
The blue flags waved, and lilies 'gan to shine;
The golden-rods and asters thronged the steep incline.

And something of that bloom was shown for me
One eager day, when the Rhodora flamed
Her leafless beauty on us suddenly
Down in an old-time pasture road, and claimed
A first love's privilege, and was not shamed:
My friend had fondest greeting for the flower,
And gentlest love-speech ever poet framed;
And all my vagrant heart was stayed, with power
Of love I never knew, until I shared his dower.

BROOKFIELD

Ah, he was richly dowered of the earth !
The grain of sand, the daisy in the sod,
Awoke his heart; and early he went forth,
Through field and wood, with young eyes all abroad;
And saw the nesting birds, and beck and nod
Of little creatures running wild and free,
Which know not that they know, yet are of God !
And kept his youth, and grew in sympathy,
And loved his fellows more, and had love's victory.

To such as heard, he was an answerer
Of things that lay outside the rule and line.
To those who loved, the follower of a star
That led him on and on with heavenly sign,
And lit his soul, and made his utterance shine;
So he went forth to many in his day:
And when he passed beyond at Sun's decline,
Some who had never seen him caught the ray;
And some came then to praise who could have cheered his way.

BROOKFIELD

There is the little cabin in the tree,
Where sometimes he would go for solitude,
And ease of heart, and thoughtful reverie,
And rain upon the roof, and dreamy mood,
And light the world hath never understood.
Ah me ! the door is broken now, and wide;
And yet, I feel as if it might intrude
Upon a resting soul to look inside;—
Such is the quietness and lack of earthly pride.

O Friend ! who so didst joy of knowledge use,
That men look up and brighten at thy name,
And speak of genius, and put by the news
To tell some good of one death cannot claim,
Nor life require to read in sculptured fame.
The wind upon the hill hath sweetest hush;
The day is melting into tenderest flame;
And from the valley, where the waters rush,
Comes up the evensong of the lone hermit-thrush.

1909-1914

CROFTON UNIACKE MACLEOD

(Only son of R. R. MacLeod.)

FIVE years thou hast been dead,—but not to me,
Oh, not to me, thou soul of living worth !
The silence cannot keep thy quiet mirth,
Nor darkness hide the form I love to see.
Silence and darkness are as naught to thee,
And time and space are only of the earth
Where thy frail body died, when thou hadst birth
Of perfect freedom in eternity.

Often, thou com'st to me in dreams of peace,
Often, in thoughts of old-time happiness
In comradeship with thee;—and all so real,
I have no thought or dream that they will cease. . . .
But thou dost come and go, with airy press
Of thy freed spirit, in eternal weal.

1919

FATHER IS DEAD

1829-1898

FATHER is dead ! And all our thoughts are calm;
—Calm with the knowledge that, to him, release
Of death was blessed as the birth of peace
After long travail of his soul's alarm.
For by that silent birth, behold the palm
Of everlasting victory won; surcrease
From battle with the demon world for ease
Of mind and body; and the end of harm.
And so, we look on him as one at rest;
Feeling within our hearts he sleepeth well;
Mourning no more; for so it seemeth best,
—Now when God's silence in our midst doth dwell—
To think he hath attained a happy state,
Beyond our mortal powers to contemplate.

1898

BESIDE MY FATHER'S GRAVE

I STOOD beside my father's grave to-day;
—My Father, who died many years ago—
And thought it was not strange, that he should know
Love drew me there to stand awhile and pray;
Or that my listening heart could hear him say:
“My son, I'm glad to see you !” It was so
We met, in those last, weary days that grow
Upon my memory, now I'm old and gray.

I doubt not he is risen from the tomb;
For at my daily task, and in my walk,
Yea ! ev'n in sleep, his voice calls unto me:
I hear it, and I see beyond the gloom;
And find Heaven's comfort in the silent talk
Of soul with soul in God's eternity.

1913

MY MOTHER

1833-1859

THOU art the loving tenderness in me,
Belovèd ! And my heart is all aflame,
With thy freed spirit yearning to reclaim
My soul to thy soul's joy !—Ah ! could I see
Thy fragrant motherhood, and image thee
In thy heart's radiance; or dimly frame
Thy angel look of love, when thou my name
Didst breathe to Heaven, as thy last legacy.

O my belovèd Mother ! words are vain,
Where memory never knew thy precious worth,
Nor ever can thy loving voice recall !
Yet, I do feel—since to me, sobbing rain
Of tears, for thee had never sorrow's birth—
Thou art in me a heaven beyond earth's thrall.

1913

MY FOSTER-MOTHER

(*Mrs. Experience Crowell*)

1809-1893

THERE were no worldly ties between us twain:—
She was bereaved, and I was motherless;
And never knew my loss, so rich the gain
Outpouring from a heart that yearned to bless.
She fretted much when I was long from her,
And I was happiest by her little hearth;
We two alone—none could be happier—
For home was there, and love without a dearth.
Mother and son, we were, through all the years;
And I reached prime, and she grew very old
And clinging—like a child—and had no fears
Or thoughts that love might fade with fading mould.
And so she seems not separate from me,
Since she hath put on immortality.

1919

MY BROTHER JOHN

THOU'RT but a step ahead of me in years;
And when one falls, the other will be there
To help him up, or, failing that, to bear
Him home and shut the door against all fears;—
Having for thought of joy, so close to tears,
The living love we each did freely share
The other, always, and no matter where,
Oblivious of the world that tacks and veers.

We're aging now, and need each other more
Than in our youth and prime, when far apart
We struggled through the wilds for breathing space;
Thanks be for life ! Thanks for the bitter core
We took for sweet ! Thanks for the patient heart !
And thanks for healing work and days of grace.

1919



II

A LEGEND OF VENICE

etc.

An echo of thee in the north-wind sung.

Keats' "Isabella."

A LEGEND OF VENICE

SWEET Adeline, the fairest, loveliest maid
In Venice,—nobly born to wealth untold—
And Theodore, a gondolier by trade,
—A handsome youth of nature's finest mould—
Looked in each other's eyes, and straight betrayed
That each the other loved. It is an old,
Old story, how these lovers conquered death
With one last, lingering sigh of mortal breath.

'Twas early on a radiant Easter morn,
When Adeline, in maiden-white attire,
With jewelled girdle flashing like the dawn,
And nestling rose that blushed with heart's desire,
Adown the marble stairs pride's tread had worn,
Passed silently; her veiled soul afire
With zeal, to tell a rosary of love
To all the blessed saints in heaven above.

A LEGEND OF VENICE

For was not Theodore—the gift of God—
To be her pilot on the holy way !
Already there, bending his shoulders broad,
With hurried ease he steers, and now doth stay
His eager boat with loop of silken cord;
And now doth re-arrange, with seeming play,
The cushioned seat;—while Adeline will read
Her missal book with eyes that do not heed.

An age she waited in a moment's dream,
Until his hand, trembling with gallant haste,
Had led her safe. And now upon the stream,
Swan-like, they glide, leaving a splendid waste
Of mingling beauty, million-hued, to gleam
In ripples o'er the mirrored way effaced;
And yet would Adeline and Theodore
See in their whispered nothings sweeter lore.

A LEGEND OF VENICE

His voice was soft and wistful as a lute:
Her every word was melody divine.
How could they otherwise than be the fruit
Of tender verse and haunting, honeyed line ?
The fancy feigns that many a lover's suit
Was won with murmuring of sonnet fine,
Wherein those imaged heart were ever warm
With pleading love that will forever charm.

O for a touch of him whose name doth dwell
In liquid numbers, gushing full and clear
In saddest song of love-lorn Isabel !
That some rich meaning might be given here
To deathless love, under the Old-World spell
Of beauty 'prisoned in this legend dear.
Haply, because the story aches the heart,
The gentle reader may forgive its art.

A LEGEND OF VENICE

Love's ferryman is wandering on the shore,
Fretting the time with empty happiness.
Love's passenger, though in her heart she bore
Her lover's heart, doth in the temple miss
His presence so, she prayeth: "Heaven no more
Were heaven, if we should be in separate bliss !
Ah, Saints and holy Virgin ! ease my eyes
With sight of wedded love in Paradise !"

And lo ! a raptured ray descended there,
And more than mortal loveliness enshrined
The maiden Adeline. She rose from prayer,
—An angel vision to the pious blind—
And in her passing, blessed the very air
With charity of love to all mankind:
'Twas told, how beggars at the temple gate
That day were clothed and fed in royal state.

A LEGEND OF VENICE

And Theodore, the gondolier !—How pale,
Death pale, and moist as mortal agony,
Then suddenly all dark with rushing zeal;
As though it were some doomful poignancy
Of heart, that piercèd him with swift assail.
Ah ! all his heart he uttered in a sigh:
And love was born !—great love for Adeline—
Immortal love, that death can never wean.

“Jesu, Maria !”—prayeth he in thought—
“I love the Lady Adeline with all
My soul, and in her eyes, if ever aught
Were true, a love as infinite doth call !
Must love be perjured, and forever fraught
With misery of life unbearable,
Because her father’s rich, and hath a pride
That would a murder do ere it would chide ?”

A LEGEND OF VENICE

“ ’Twere sweeter far, for me to die unshrived,
Than to profane my love with craven care ! ”
And Adeline !—for so her heart hath thrived
Upon a sigh—Her beauty groweth there,
All wondrous with expectancy arrived;
And like a rose that loves the wooing air,
Her parting lips doth yield the bliss of love,—
The unseen bliss that only love may prove.

And there were panting words and dear consent,
In melting language all too incomplete
For record cold,—save with the heart’s intent;
And yet, we know those lovers vowed to meet
That night in secret place, for love’s content:
—With love content, though love were life’s defeat—
Ah, how they dallied at the palace quay !
Saying: “ O would ’twere night, instead of day ! ”

A LEGEND OF VENICE

And Theodore, that day, was like a bird
Leaving its happy mate in downy nest,
Yet ever flitting near with song that stirred
Her there to chirp and peep in fluttering quest:
He sang an old refrain, a ditty weird
With mystery of love that may not rest
Its yearning spirit long in earthly room:
"La Belle Dame Sans Merci is true love's doom."

And when 'twas dark, and all the palace slept,
He tied his boat, and climbed the balcony;
And like a thief of love he softly crept,
And 'gainst the lattice leaned so hungrily
There was a sobbing sigh—as though love wept—
And then, ah ! then there was great ecstasy !
And lovers' happiness in lady's bower,
That night did linger till the dawning hour.

A LEGEND OF VENICE

For Adeline and Theodore were young,
And beautiful as dream, and richly made
For love in Venice—whom the World hath sung
These thousand years in verse that will not fade.
It was in Venice Desdemona hung
Upon the swarthy Moor impassionèd:
And Venice, in her prime imperial,
Was life, and love, and death, in carnival.

All blissful nights those lovers' meetings were,
All full of blissful promise was each day;
He had no thought but it did turn to her,
She bade her bosom secret with him stay;
Truly, they seemed twin souls that could not stir
The air of heaven, save with a single ray;
And thus they might have lived and loved unknown
To earthly song,—which only makes sweet moan—

A LEGEND OF VENICE

Had not, one night (O love-betraying night !)
The lady's brothers spied young Theodore
Upon his pilgrimage. It was a sight
Unthought to them; and hurrying oaths they swore;
And their all-baffled eyes were fierce with light
Of vengeance born, as near the bolted door
They crouched and listened to love's pleading voice,
And heard consenting love with love rejoice.

But after that,—love's silence lasting there—
The brothers 'gan to fret with strained nerve,
And ghostly chilliness of midnight air;
And whispering an easy plan to serve
Their thirsting purpose soon, they pledged the care
Of lover's fate with hearts that would not swerve;
And crawled away, each to his dreamless bed,
To sleep the sweeter for a murder bred.

A LEGEND OF VENICE

The red sun roused them on the morrow morn,
And they rose up as on a holiday;
The red blood tingled with a joy new-born,
As with their jewelled daggers they did play;
And when upon their searching eyes did dawn
The love-light of their sister gloriously,
With ruddy zest, they mocked her love divine,
In golden loving-cups of blood-red wine.

And then they sought their agèd father's ear,
And told him all that they had seen and heard,—
Saying they deemed it wise that he should hear.
Their father's pallid face to marble stirred,
And his thin voice came deadly cold and drear:
—As though a frozen heart were in each word—
“If in your veins a drop of my blood flows,
This man shall die the death that no one knows.”

A LEGEND OF VENICE

Night came, and covered the sweet eyes of heaven;
And the sea moaned, like its sad heaving breast
Had pain of soul for all its vast unshriven
Dead; and the winds were torn as with unrest
Of houseless ghosts, lost wailing spirits, driven
Hither and thither by sins unconfessed:
It was a night for evil death to seek
Its prey of love, and darkest vengeance wreak.

"Ah, Theodore, my love ! I had such strain
Of heart, lest some mischance should beggar thee
And me of love this night, that words are vain
To tell my heart-ease in love's companie."
"My Adeline, belovèd ! I would gain
Thy side, though sudden death encompassed me:
So do I love thee, dear, thou art my goal
Of deathless love beyond the grave's control."

A LEGEND OF VENICE

And often would the lovers breathe farewell,
Only to cling more close in tenderness,
Until, dreamlike, some power invisible
Compelled a last adieu. Ah, piteous stress !
For such a swift heart-rending doom befell
Young Theodore, he did but seem to bless
His love with all his heart, in one long sigh
To Adeline,—who thought it love's good-bye.

She knew not that he sank upon the stair
A streaming corpse, but met his speeding soul
With airy kiss and heavenly whispered prayer;
Then to her fragrant chamber, soft, she stole,
To sleep and dream her lover still was there;
The while her brothers, in their bloody role,
Gloating in darkness o'er their victim's clay,
Made haste to hide it from the coming day.

A LEGEND OF VENICE

They left their daggers quivering in its heart,
And dragged the warm limp body to the boat,
Where like a huddled heap flung from a cart
It lay, until Murano's yawning throat
Was reached; and there, with horrid fumbling art,
They weighted it with stones, lest it should float,
And slid it overboard; and thence it sped
To find a place among the murdered dead.

Some of them stirred: And one grinned horribly,
And one did lift its eyeless face all pale,
And one dark form half rose, then helplessly
Fell back again. O what a mournful tale,
If those unburied souls their agony
Of death could speak ! Full surely, 'twould avail
With pitying heaven to give them painless sleep,
Till the loud trump shall call from deep to deep.

A LEGEND OF VENICE

The murderers homeward turned; and laboured hard
Ere dawn should point red fingers at the blood
Upon the stair, and spoil their heart's reward
In fiendish revel, when next night they stood
Outside love's portal never more unbarred
For love,—now love lies weltering 'neath the flood.
“Ha ha !” they said: “The rarest sport will be
To hear our sister in her misery.”

Like evil things scenting a new-made grave,
They skulked, and squatted at her chamber door,
To feast on woful sounds that sob and rave;—
As though someone were crazed and walked the floor,
And pressed the lattice with cold lips that crave
A boon of death,—since love doth come no more—
Only to hear the dead-march of the sea,
And the sad night-wind sighing fearfully.

A LEGEND OF VENICE

But ha, the brothers had no glee that night !
Such ghostly knowledge came upon them there,
The hot blood in them went all cold with fright,
And they quick blessed themselves in chattering prayer.
God's truth ! It was a murdered man did plight
Great love unto their sister, who did spare
No tenderness of word or sweet embrace,—
Saying she'd kiss the sea-chill from his face.

"It is the gondolier !"—they whisperèd—
"The loving youth we stabbed last night to death !
Curse him ! Why hath he left his watery bed
To woo our sister with a ghastly wraith ?
We should have shrouded him in coffin lead,
And with an Avè sealed his mortal breath !"
So muttered they, and stole below to hide,—
Shivering with grave-yard fears, yet eager-eyed.

A LEGEND OF VENICE

Now chanticleer upraised his shrillest strain,
And little birds their gossip 'gan to sing,
And at the palace rail love kissed again:
The brothers saw their sister vanishing,
And heard the long-drawn sigh of love's refrain,
But nothing else;—and with strange wondering,
That shuddered at the mists of morn, they went
To tell their father how the night was spent.

They woke him from an old man's phantom dream,
To hear that murdered love gave death the lie.
Their story done, he told of fading gleam
In dying eyes, and oozing spirit's sigh,
But said he never knew a soul redeem
Its pledge of life from death's dark forfeitry:
Unsactioned love had crazed their sister's brain;
He would devise a solace for her pain.

A LEGEND OF VENICE

Upon her father's summons, Adeline
Came with fond curtsy; and against his cheek,
Wrinkled and white, her soft rich bloom did lean;
And with her scarlet-berried lips did seek
His love so sweetly, that a face unseen
For years shone on him there, and made him weak:
It was a mother's loveliness that pled
For Adeline. Ah, pity she was dead !

The weeping willow, full of leafy woe,
Hangs o'er her sculptured urn; the cuckoo sings
Its boding sorrow, mournfully and low;
The heavy cloud a wreathèd shadow flings
Upon the sunken mound; and to and fro
The faded grass the pale moth spreads its wings:
Come hither grief, and cry "Alas, the day !"
For love and death soon will be one for aye.

A LEGEND OF VENICE

"Daughter ! Thy ghostly father telleth me
Thou hast not been to holy shrift of late:
And since this so unwonted lack in thee
Grieves his good heart, do thou no longer wait.
Perhaps, unknown to us, some enemy
Of thy sweet soul envies thy mortal state."
So spake the aged parent to his child,
Who—save in love—was dutiful and mild.

She gently answered, she would do his will;
And gazing in his face with radiant air,—
As though a thought of heavenly love did thrill
Her soul—she said: "The Church hath kindly care
For all,—The happy folk, as well as ill,—
Since the dear Virgin-mother reigneth there:
And haply, there, my heart, all fault confessing,
Shall take from holy love increase of blessing."

A LEGEND OF VENICE

With clasped hands and raptured upturned face,
She kneels awhile in silent adoration,
Before the blessed Virgin's pictured grace,—
Lit with the glory of divine creation,
By some great artist soul inspired to trace
The Motherhood of God in mediation.
Ora pro nobis ! O thou Queen of Heaven,
Who hast to countless hearts love's comfort given !

O heart of love ! What mayst thou confess,
But that thou knowest nothing else save love,
And that to love is only happiness !—
The great white flame, wherein life's splendours move
In ever burning, unconsuming bliss;
The call of heaven to earth—which all may prove:
O heart of love, thou art as strong as death !
Thy spirit liveth in love's fleeting breath !

A LEGEND OF VENICE

"Dear child, thy heart is open unto me.

Thou hast a secret lover, Theodore:

Doth not in this thy conscience trouble thee ?"

"Nay, father, it doth not !—Though I forbore
To tell. Thou knowest 'tis God's secrecy

Hath touched my lips ! Wouldst have me that deplore ?
—Mother of God ! Whatever be my fate,
I cannot from my love be separate !"

"My child ! Thou art in unforgiven sin,
Except thou wilt renounce thy lover here !"

"Ah, never that ! Even now, my heart doth win
Heaven's joy—for perfect love hath cast out fear."

"Daughter, I cannot sanction this ! Thou'st been
Deceived ! He'd marry thee, wert thou so dear !"

"My father, he hath kept far better faith;
For we have sworn to love in life and death."

A LEGEND OF VENICE

Dark horror seized upon the listening priest;
For he heard hollow laughter in his prayer;
And knew the maiden met in nightly tryst,
A spectred lover sworn to seek her there.—
And hasting like a saint from sin releast,
He told her father he must penance bear,
And pay for requiem mass and holy charm,
To lay the ghost, and rid his house of harm.

The anxious father many a penance sought;
—Groaning in spirit, as his gold he spends—
The priest went lean and piously distraught,
Until he found a secret hour to cleanse
The haunted room with holy water, brought
From Jordan's sacred stream, for wondrous ends:
For Adeline did seldom venture forth;—
Since night meant love, the day was little worth.

A LEGEND OF VENICE

And now they watch beside love's bolted door
And on the moonlit quay the brothers wait.
The priest, forsooth, believed, that nevermore
The ghost would pass beyond its mortal fate;
But ah ! He could not know, how love so sure,
Is boundless as the faith it doth create:
O mighty love ! 'Twas thine unconscious breath
Did burst th' eternal barriers of death !

And now love cometh home ! The watchers heard
Soft utterances within. And fearfully
They listened to a voice more sweet than bird:
It was the maiden in her ecstasy !
And then the lover's voice, and deathless word:
What tenderness from love's immensity !
Yet none of them saw anything that night;—
Nor did a shadow stir the pale moonlight.

A LEGEND OF VENICE

"O horrible ! My child hath wed a curse,
And black perdition on this house will bring !
God's mercy should have stifled her at nurse,
Ere the sweet babe could love an evil thing;
For now—O agony !—I must do worse !—
And Heaven forgive me, priest, or Hell will sing !
Sons ! Go and hire murder's two meanest slaves
To drown your sister in Murano's waves !"

And with the morning sun, came Adeline
To greet her father, as she loved to do.
(O my rude muse ! Thou must not touch that scene,
Though thou wilt dare to tell the story through !)
Her father said: "Here, take these flowers. I mean
Them for the Virgin of the sea,—and you
Will carry them to her. Delay no more.
A gondola awaits you at the door."

A LEGEND OF VENICE

So from her father, tremulous and bent,
 She took the sacred flowers. And like a bride
Going at last to life's great sacrament,
 She on the death-boat stepped, and down the tide
To love's eternity, all joyous went;—
 And to her happy heart the oars replied:
For she was dreaming of the latest kiss
Upon her lips, and of returning bliss.

Long while she dreamed,—with her great dreamy eyes
 Upon the flowers, red as the Virgin's heart,—
Till, on a sudden, she felt strange surprise;
 And looking round, she said: "Have you your part
Mistaken? Towards the sea my journey lies:
 But this goes to Murano's loveless mart."
"Lady," the boatman said, "You need not fear.
Your father ordered thus. Your way lies here."

A LEGEND OF VENICE

She held her peace, though it distressed her why
Her father had not told her all his will;
And to herself she oft made gentle sigh,
And in her heart she prayed: "O thou art still
My guardian, blessed Virgin, ever nigh !
And thou wilt shield thy helpless child from ill.
Forever with my love, I nothing crave;
For thou dost know I love beyond the grave."

Above the walls of dark Murano's isle,
The cypr^{ess} trees uprear their heavy gloom:
The dying maiden looked on them awhile,
And thought of lovers sobbing at the tomb.
"Dear God !"—she murmured, with love's pitying smile—
"For him and me death hath no severed doom."
And yet, she shudders. Ah! the boat moves slow;—
Through water thick with crime 'tis hard to row.

A LEGEND OF VENICE

"Why do we stop ?" "Lady, this is the end."

And though the wretches each wore troubled look,
Cold murder was to them an only friend;

They thought of pity slain, and courage took.
The maiden rose,—as if a deadly hand

Were laid on her, and with death passion shook:
Yet nothing touched her there. Only her doom
Had brushed her, on its way to chilly tomb.

And yet, she uttered no despairing prayer:—

She was too much in love to be afraid.

"You need not touch me: I, myself, will dare

To die for love." So spake the sweetest maid
Death ever drew, for love's sake, to his lair;

And doubting not of the dear Virgin's aid,
Nor of her lover's troth, her eyes did rest
Their angel gaze upon the water's breast.

A LEGEND OF VENICE

ut, quick, her soul grew faint with deathly sight,
And all her heart rushed out in anguished cry.
Yet t'was a moment only she had fright;
For see, her lovely face is lit with joy.
She knows those rayless eyes that seek the light,
And whose red lips are paler than the sea:
It is her waiting lover, Theodore;
Soon will her arms enfold him evermore.

She is so eager for her breathless weal,
The murderers forget why they were sent,
And both stretch forth their hands with mercy's zeal.
"Ah no !" she said,—and they great tears did vent—
"Do not be sad for me. Death cannot steal
The love to which I go." And thus she went;
Nor any bubble came, of her sweet breath,
To tell those sin-saved souls that she met death.

A LEGEND OF VENICE

They blessed themselves, and stared in wondering awe;
—With heavenly light the water was agleam—
And there, within the pearly depths, they saw
The lovers clasped in love's immortal dream.
And ever since, the hallowed tide doth draw
Those vowing love beyond death's shoreless stream:
But only those who have love's faith may see
These storied lovers,—so love telleth me.

1907

THE MONK AND THE BIRD

"There is one fable," says Stevenson, "that touches very near the quick of life: the fable of the monk who passed into the woods, heard a bird break into song, hearkened for a trill or two, and found himself on his return a stranger at his convent gates; for he had been absent fifty years, and of all his comrades there survived but one to recognize him."

LONG ages gone, so doth the legend tell,
There lived a novice who, with zeal and trust,
Sought truth and wisdom in an abbey cell;
And with his holy brethren from the lust
Of worldly eyes secure, and guarded well
By mighty woods, wherein no zephyr strayed,
Nor gleam of sun, nor the pale glimmering light
Of stars an entrance found, he toiled and prayed,
And penance did full many a day and night.

THE MONK AND THE BIRD

Coarse were his garments, and a shirt of hair
Next to his wounded flesh he wore to spurn
The body's pain; his numbèd feet were bare;
And dust of martyrs who in fire did burn
Covered his head: no meat nor wine for fare
Had he, but daily filled his brain with lore
Of musty scrolls, and with the richest art
Transcribed rare missals for the hungry poor,
That they might pray unto The Bleeding Heart.

Yet his own heart was cheerless as the stones
He knelt upon; and often would a tear
Wet the wan cheek, as he besought with groans
The marble saints to slay each secret fear,
And banish from his soul all the sweet tones
Of life's affections, lest the Master's call
To poverty, obeyed for love of God
And Holy Church, should fruitless be, and all
The hope of Heaven die with his mortal clod.

THE MONK AND THE BIRD

And so he strove, this monk of ancient days,
Until th' unshriven ghosts of his dead past
Fled like affrighted shadows from the blaze
Of light so piercing cold, his soul at last
Attained:—The pious agèd were amaze,
That one who was most nobly framed to give
And take all knightly pleasures, could thus soon
Disdain the earth which mothered him, and live
As though High Heaven contained life's only boon.

The years roll on, and summers wax and wane,
And now once more the winter yields to spring;
The dead that sleep stir with a quickening pain,
The living heart of beauty 'gins to sing,
The loveliness of earth returns again;
And he who lingers in the wood to hear
The wooing ecstasy of birds, doth feel
A joy unutterable, and draweth near
To knowledge of his soul's eternal weal.

THE MONK AND THE BIRD

But what were beauty to the learnèd monk,
Or what were all the wealth of life in love ?
His dead-calm caverned eyes had never drunk
The glory of the wild red rose that throve
Against the abbey wall; and he had shrunk
From touch of human sympathy so long,
So long had dwelt apart from all desire
Of nature's fellowship, the pleasing song
Of Orpheus might have failed to draw him nigher.

Poor lonely soul, who with the mummied dead
Did think to live ! What was his mortal fate ?
Unnumbered Avès for his sake were said,
And masses sung; and the old abbey gate
Was open left, though fifty years had fled
Since he into the woods one Passion Morn
Passed silently alone, and ne'er a word,
Vouchsafed in vision or in dream forlorn,
Of sudden doom or lingering death was heard.

THE MONK AND THE BIRD

Yet why need we the silent years delay ?
They ache to tell—in miracle most rare—
Of how the monk returned on Easter day;
And white as driven snow was all his hair,
And his deep eyes expressed in wondrous way
The timeless rapture of a living heart.
Oh ! such a change divine in him was shown,
The brethren of the abbey well might start,—
And whisper: “’Tis some Sainte to us unknown !”

In sooth he was a stranger to them there;
For all his comrades of dead yesterday
Slept in their graves, save one, and he did stare,—
And mumble brokenly; “Good Brother ! May
The Saintes forget my weak-en eyne did weare
No welcome ! Long ago, we alle hed thought
Kynde hev’n did eas-en thee thy lern-ed solle !
And now a hev’nlie miracle is wrought,
Which we wolde know yere vesper bell doth tolle.”

THE MONK AND THE BIRD

And as they waited eagerly to hear
The learnèd monk, his glowing eyes did greet
The setting sun with light of some most dear
Remembrance, and his speech was strangely sweet.—
Yet only this he said: "Oh, Brothers ! Near
To God-des heart I am; so near, all tyme
Is lost, sith into yonder gloomie wood
I passed, and, pausing, hearkened to the rhyme
Of life sung by a bird in melting mood."

1902

THE HEART'S CALL

"Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard are sweeter."
Keats.

POOOR foolish heart ! To let a word or two,
Writ by a crony of thine eager days,
Make thee to sigh, and tinge with misty hue
The fond regard, and mingle pain with praise !
Thou shouldst have known the urge of life, and change,
In one grown opulent in alien lands,
And long from home ! Thy sad simplicity
Is altogether strange,
And lost, amid the roaring world's commands
To crush the heart in fierce activity.

THE HEART'S CALL

Yet, still my heart doth whisper: Memory dear !
The roaring world ! To us what may it mean ?
—Heard only in a flitting dream of fear,
Or only in the gloom of magic seen.—
Come, let us wander back the aery way;
Back to the olden time, and little town
Where we were born, and join in jollity,
And long, long holiday
With young delight and frolic, wild, and brown,
And ruddy in the breezy summer glee.

O, unregarded liberty and joy
Of life ! Rich boon of health, when but to be
Is all the knowledge of a growing boy !
—What if my heart doth feign thine ecstasy !—
Again the dewy breath of peeping day,
And the sweet call of bird, wake all my being;
And in delicious ease awhile I lie,
—Hearing the swishing play
Of mowers in the field, and merry ring
Of whetted scythe,—under a cloudless sky.

THE EART'S CALL

Out in the sunny fields among the hay !
Ha ha ! what laughing, shouting, scamp'ring round;
What daring somersault, and whisking fray;
What burying beneath the fluffy mound.
And oh, the last great load !—piled mountain high
Above the waggon sides, and trimmed with care,
And fastened well with binding pole and chain,
—What triumph, then, can vie
With proudest happiness of cuddling there,
And riding homeward down the grassy lane !

The grassy lane with spreading willow trees;
The tan-bark walk, and wild rose blooming there;
The brook that babbles through the fields: Aye ! these
Are dear. Yet dearer still, beyond compare,
The little low-roofed house and open door,
And mother waiting, querulous with love
At long delay of wanderers from the home:
And these—the golden core
Of unbought memories—how far above
All fame of wealth beneath a palace dome !

THE HEART'S CALL

My mother !—She who took me motherless,
And all her widowed heart did fret and grieve,
Lest I should ever miss the tenderness
Of that sweet soul, who unto heaven didst breathe
My name.—Dear mother: Thou hast love's reward;
And art with those thou lovest,—evermore.
O grave ! The heart of love hath conquered thee,
When death is but a word
Of home, after the toil or play is o'er,
And night hath come with its great mystery.

And so, I listen to a melody
Of home within my heart that neither years
Nor change may sadden. And the memory
Of sorrow turns to joy, and shadowy fears
Fade into children's laughter,—in the light,
The dreamy wonder-light of long ago.
And all the old familiar scenes appear
In wistful beauty dight.
And old-time voices call; and one doth flow
Into my heart and sing the song I hear.

1905

AFTER READING THE RUBAIYAT

For some we loved, the loveliest and the best
That from his Vintage roiling Time hath prest,
Have drunk their Cup a round or two before,
And one by one crept silently to rest.
The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam.

"Write me as one that loves his fellow-men."
Leigh Hunt.

OMAR ! The cup from which Thou drankest Wine
—Rare blend of Sweet and Bitter from the Vine—
Is in my hand; and ere it pass for aye,
I pledge thee with these stained Lips of mine.

Pledge thee with Memories of the Bitter-Sweet
The Cup did yield, when in the fervid Heat
Of Youth, I drank to Joy and Sorrow twain;
And laughed to see such sworn foes smile and greet.

AFTER READING THE RUBAIYAT

For out of those wild Orgies of the Brain,
Where oft I lifted high the Cup to drain
 It to the Lees, I issued forth at last,
A man wiser of Pleasure and of Pain.

Victory, or Destiny ! Ah, which is true
Of me, a Son of Earth ? What other clue
 To Peace had I, than but to hold myself
Erect before my Fellow-dustmen's view ?

Who looked within my Soul and saw arrayed
The Higher 'gainst the Lower, undismayed
 Of Loss, or unallured of Gain, to Self,
Or question of Expediency or Trade ?

From Birth environed by a frowning Mass
Of Earth-Works guarding every move: To pass
 Beyond a hair's breadth, and be wholly Free !
—Alas, not Here ! and Echo mocking cries, "Alas !"

AFTER READING THE RUBAIYA'T

Where then the Victory o'er the Self, O Soul ?
—Blind and in Prison, burrowing as a Mole
 Beneath the Clay; and if the Light be reacht,
Blinder and more uncertain of thy Goal.

For thou hast never known another Home:
Only in Dreams thou seemedst Outside to roam;
 —Haply in Dreams of Paradise—and yet,
So glad to waken 'neath thy Darkened Dome.

Some Earth and Water and a little Fire,
And lo ! Life's Trinity, the Soul's Desire,
 Is Visible awhile, and then Is Not:
--Who Knoweth this IS ALL, of him enquire.

Of him enquire ? Nay, let such Matter be
Immersed in Matter ! I care more to see
 With Eye of Faith the Real-Invisible,
That with Love's Strength shall make the Temple free.

AFTER READING THE RUBAIYAT

And you, who question to deny me this !
I've spilled more Wine with you, in fancied Bliss
Of Ignorance, than is left within the Cup,
And need to save what you will hardly miss.

The Cup is Shadow-deep with Wine of Life,
And, peering o'er the Rim, faint Hopes are rife
With Time for Penitence:—Ah, let me nerve
The Soul sufficient for the Final Strife !

Not with the Calm Indifference of Fate
Which breathes out "Allah Akbar ! God is Great !"
Nor yet with ecstasie of Vision filled,
But just with Love; though Love outside the Gate.

Outside the Gate, where wander Homeless Poor
Begging a little Wine from Door to Door
From those who, sleek and fat with Love of God,
Forget Man's Love for Man availeth more.

AFTER READING THE RUBAIYAT

O Soul of Me, so weak in Penitence
Over a Broken Law, and thy Offence
So great ! Cease doubling on thy Self, and help
A little towards some Neighbor's Recompense !

And when the Loving-Cup is Emptied quite,
If any one shall stand and say: "Good Night
My Friend, and may To-Morrow smile on thee !"
What matters, if the Morrow be not Bright !

1898

AN UNCUT TRANSLATION

(CICERO'S ORATIONS)

"There was—there was once such virtue in this republic that brave men would repress mischievous citizens with severer chastisement than the most bitter enemy."—*Cicero*.

THOU yet unopen'd book of eloquence !
Thou slighted fane of the translator's art,
Neglected classic! what unknown offence
Against thy fellows fated thee, apart
From them, to hide thyself in rust and mould
For near a century ere thou wast by chance
Unearthed ? What doom of life, what ling'ring dream
Of scholar's fame, what odour of romance,
Clings to thine uncut leaves ? What ghosts of old
Divinities within thy portals gleam ?

AN UNCUT TRANSLATION

Ah, with how eager haste my ivory blade
Lies in a tender radiance on each name:
Though, at that instant, seem to sigh and fade
Away some prison'd spirits, as in shame
Of wisdom's excellence so long unsought.
But peace to them ! since thou, great soul of Rome
And heir of list'ning ages, Cicero,
Hast come to me,—who found this stately tome
In dim seclusion—and, with sumptuous thought,
Dost ease awhile the hours' dull aching flow.

And yet, O dumb remonstrance of that rage,
When Cæsar, urged by lust of conquest, fell !
O graven breath upon a crumbl'd page
Of time ! Would that the gods might loose the spell
Of past eternity, and let me see
Thy life, and feel thy majesty of speech.
These latter days, a-choke with venal thirst,
And hoarse with voice of brass, they cannot teach
The soul the moral worth and dignity
Of Rome when Roman liberty was first.

1896

ON THE DEATH OF GLADSTONE

"This is the happy warrior; this is he;
That every man in arms should wish to be."

The "Daily Chronicle," of England, commenced its editorial on the death of Gladstone with this quotation.

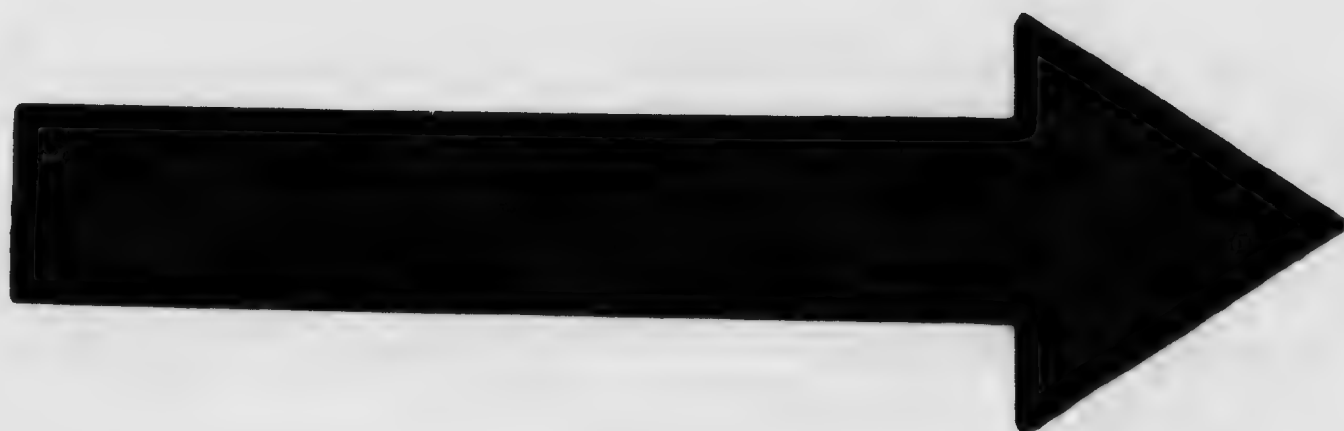
HARK to the bells !
The bells of Britain tolling, tolling, low.
For we, her children waiting by the sea,
Hear them within our souls, and feel that Time, and Space,
And Life, and Death, are centered in that place,
Where He, the Strong Man of a mighty race,
After an endless victory,
Lay down to rest until the Trump shall blow,
And all the dead be raised from out their dusty cells.

ON THE DEATH OF GLADSTONE

For he is dead!
GLADSTONE, the Grand Old Man !
The grandest living force the age hath seen.
Truly, among its heroes, there hath been
None grander, none more nobly royal:
None mightier in the People's love,
None to the State more loyal:
And now, O excellence sublime ! his name doth move
The World with reverence for the Man
That lives—though dead.

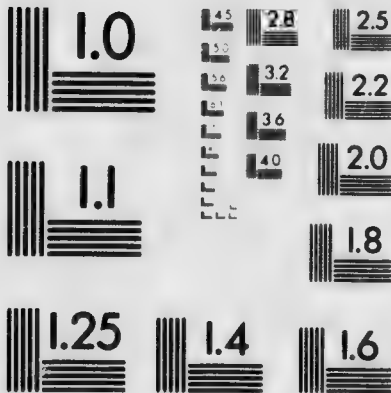
And he is Greater Britain's dead !
And she will bury him within her heart;
That there, in her life sepulchred,
He shall remain of her a living part:
 Such love hath she,
 Such virtue he.
Such virtue ! What high speech avails us here ?
We cannot think the words which make it clear;
We can but feel the strength of Christ's true light
Exemplified in this man's wondrous might,
And fold our hands, and bow in silent prayer,
And trust the God that made our day so fair.

1898



MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2



A CHRISTMAS BALLAD

Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye
did it not to me.—*Matt. xxv., 46.*

THIS is the birthday of a King,
Acknowledged of the Church and State;
And yet, the while the joy-bells ring,
A King stands waiting at the gate."

Thus sang a herald 'bove the din,
And all the people list'ning heard;
But no one moved to let him in,
For none believed the herald's word.

Yet still, the herald sang, "A King
Stands waiting at the gate ! A Man
For whom your Christmas joy-bells ring,
Stands waiting there since day began.

A CHRISTMAS BALLAD

"He waits in majesty and might,
Attended by a countless host;
He waits to judge the wrong with right,
And yet, he waits in no vain boast.

"Ye are his subjects, great and small,
High honours ye shall have from him;
And conquests large, and peace for all;
O never shall his glory dim !

"Then haste, ere yet the day be fled,
And strew the pathway of your King;
Strew evergreens, and hollies red,
And let your little children sing."

A CHRISTMAS BALLAD

And all day long the herald sang,
And all day long the people heard,
And all day long the joy-bells rang,
Yet all day long the gates were barr'd.

"For this is Christmas day," they said,
"The birthday of the King of kings,
We go to church and bow the head,
And then we feast on all good things.

"No want is in our city gates,
Our poor are warmed and fed to-day;
And, though outside a herald waits,
We own no alien monarch's sway."

A CHRISTMAS BALLAD

The sun went down, and in the sky
The stars shone out with lustre bright;
The city slept, nor heard that cry,
Of pain and anguish, through the night:

"I came unto my own, and then
My own received me not ! A thing
Rejected and despised of men,
They barr'd their hearts against the King."

* * * *

The morning broke ! The city gate
Was open'd wide ! Outside was found
A beggar, dead, whom Church and State
Gave long-sought rest beneath the ground.

1895

A CHILD SHALL LEAD

Here at the portal thou dost stand,
And with thy little hand
Thou openest the mysterious gate
Into the future's undiscovered land.

Longfellow.

I SLEPT: and lo! there came, in dream, to me
—To me grown old and gray before my time—
A child with eyes all wild with ecstasie,
And touselled hair, and voice like haunting chime
Of far-off bells, and took me by the hand
And led me wandering, careless, far astray
From busy ways of man, to strangest land;
Into deep woods, where scarcely any ray

A CHILD SHALL LEAD

Of light trembled among the trees so tall
And sombre, and so thickly overgrown;
Nor stayed its noiseless feet at sweetest call
Of bird, which into the dark wood alone
Had followed us, until a grassy height
Of boundless space was won. When, suddenly,
The child was vanished utterly from sight—
And I bereft: save that the bird with me
Remained, and still its happy song pursued,
And so my troubled soul it did employ
With innocence, and merry-making mood,
I dreamed the child was in my heart; and joy
Of love, new-found, woke me at break of day;
And up I rose, and went the sunlit way.

1896

THAT'S ALL

Each on his own strict line we move,
And some find death ere they find love.

Matthew Arnold.

WRECK'D on the shore ! Wreck'd in his prime !
Found dead—poor son of Time !
And oh, the irony of fate !
The bitter irony ! For see the gate
Of morning op'ning wide, and fair
As yester's dream, the day, with golden hair
And smiling face, plays with him there;
And tenderly, ah, tenderly,
The pallid sea,
Pale with remorse,
Sighs o'er his corse.

THAT'S ALL

Wreck'd on the shore ! Wreck'd in his prime !
And yet, what nameless crime
Had he attempted that High Heaven
Thus dealt with him, and sent unshriven
His soul before its Maker ? Ah !
'Twas not so long ago, over the bar
He sped with all sail set, and far
 Was seen his glowing wake, and free,
 The open sea,
 Spread all before,
 As on he bore.

And on he bore, as many a time
Had others, towards that clime
Where never care is known, and hope
Is changed for peace—that sunny slope
Which dips into the golden East—
And where the voyageurs forever feast
On dreams of youth. And yet, this one, the least
 Of all ! Why did he fail ?
 Was there a gale ?
 Ah no ! It was a red flash light,—
 Instead of white.

1895

IT SEEMS BUT YESTERDAY

O joy ! that in our embers
Is something that doth live,
That nature yet remembers:

• • • •
Delight and liberty, the simple creed
Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest.

Wordsworth.

IT seems but yesterday, that I, a boy,
Made life a play;
But yesterday, my little cup of joy
Was full alway.
But ah, 'twas long ago !
—That yesterday of joy and play—
And yet, it may be so,
That part of my eternity
Is playtime's yesterday in me.

IT SEEMS BUT YESTERDAY

And yesterday it seems, I, ere I laid
 Me down to sleep,
In simple faith clasped childish hands, and prayed
 The Lord to keep
My soul. But 'tis not so !
—The grave of yesterday is deep—
And yet, I feel and know,
That part of my eternity
Is that same faith and prayer in me.

1897

MATERIALISM AND SPIRITUALISM

I accept Reality and dare not question it,
Materialism first and last imbuing.

• • • • •
This day before dawn I ascended a hill and look'd at the crowd'd heaven,
And I said to my spirit: When we have become the enfolders of those orbs
and the pleasure and knowledge of everything in them, shall we be
fill'd and satisfied then ?

And my spirit said No, we but level that lift to pass and continue beyond.
Walt Whitman.

WHEN we see a drop of dew ablaze with light;
And gaze upon the growing grass and trees and flowers,
And are glad with the breath of the earth and its fruitage;
When we watch the marvellous flight of birds,
And hear them sing in mating time;
When we think of the beasts of the field and forest,
And all the myriad creatures of the elements;
When we look upon the green hills,
And view afar the hoary-headed mountains
In their veil'd solitude;

MATERIALISM AND SPIRITUALISM

When we have sight of mighty rivers
Moving in silent majesty,
And contemplate the awful restlessness of the great deep;
When we behold the heavens pierc'd with flame;—
And the crash and roll of thunder
Thrill the clouds, and the rain comes down;
When we feel the earth trembling with heart-throes;
When we consider all the works of nature:—
The Earth-ball in its vast orbit,
The life-producing Sun and Air,
The Moon and Stars by Night,
And the unnumbered rolling mass of dead and living worlds
In space Illimitable;
And then reflect that man and his inventions,
His palaces and huts,
His millions and his crust of bread,
Are also of the texture of the Universe;
Then we exclaim: What are we, more than these !

But when we feel within us,
Wonder of wonders ! That which manifests, expresses, and
relates all substance,
And yet is infinitely unseen: -The first and last cause !

MATERIALISM AND SPIRITUALISM

By which we live and move and have our being,
And have subdued earth-forces, and encompass'd orbs
To which this habitable globe is but a mote;
That which doth hold a universe unknown within its grasp;—
Transcending Time and Space,
Imagining God and the Devil,
Conquering Death and the Grave,
Embracing Heaven and Hell;
The eternal Questioner and the eternal Answerer;—
And most of all, that which doth gladly sell itself for Love—
 which is always poor;
Then are we Spirits crying, praying, laughing, singing, leaping
 in the Dust !
Then is the Spirit of Eternity our very Soul-and-Body !
And then, O ecstasy of Truth ! O Love Divine !
We are indeed the Sons of God !—
“And it doth not yet appear what we shall be !”

1905

RENUNCIATION

Learn, by a mortal yearning, to ascend—
Seeking a higher object. Love was given,
Encouraged, sanctioned, chiefly for that end;
That self might be annulled:

Wordsworth.

WHAT dost thou seek ? Ah ! is it Life ?
Then take my hand, and I will lead
Thee far beyond this world of strife,
Beyond all shadows I will lead,
To where there is no doom of night;
Unto eternal realms of light;
Unto the great White Throne;
And there, the King shall give
Thee thy desire: To live,
Is but to die to self alone !

RENUNCIATION

Or is it Love ? Then know that I, even I,
Am Love ! Yet not the narrow grave,
Where thy pale form shall one day lie,
Shall find me ! Far beyond the grave
I am; and, past decay and change,
With me forever shalt thou range;
And nevermore, nor pain, nor moan,
Nor the unquiet hope thou hast
On earth, attend thee: all is past—
For Love is death of self alone !

* * * * *

Ah, Death ! Is it thou ?
Thy breath cools my brow;
And yet, I cannot feel thy hand.
Draw nearer still, and let thy grand
Presence fill my soul !
Thou art the goal
Of life and Love
On earth: above
Thee, none supreme—
Self ! Thou art a dead dream !

1895

III

SONNET GLEANINGS

A Sonnet is a moment's monument,—
Memorial from the Soul's eternity
To one dead deathless hour.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

BEFORE MY FIRE

STRETCHED out in easy chair before my fire
Of maple wood upon old andirons piled,
With cherished book and pleasing pipe of mild
Virginian weed, I lose each vain desire
And self regret, nor of the world enquire.
Hearing the rocking of the storm-wind wild,
—As 'twere a mother crooning to her child—
My vagrant soul doth into dreams retire.

O radiant shadows of the flame-lit hearth !
When the long winter nights yield leisure time
To be, and grow incorporate, with all
Great names that live eternal in their worth
Of thought and deed upon the page sublime,
What immortality doth on me fall !

1906

IN DREAM I SAW

MINE eyes were closed, yet, as in dream, I saw
Two glories robed in light ineffable;
And on my ears, dream-like, there rose and fell
Music so ravishing it did withdraw
My soul beyond all time and being's flaw,
Into that realm where truth and beauty dwell;
Forever and for aye unconquerable
Of earthly pain, or death's eternal law.

'Twas Ariel and Adonais !—Spirits rare !—
Singing, in mortal words, immortal glee
Of life in beauty and the glow of love;
Of freedom, and the wind, and cloud; and there,
The lark up-springing in its ecstasie
Of heart outpoured, into the heaven above.

1906

KEATS

SWEET melodist upon the pipes of Pan !
Who, Orpheus-like, didst cause the hills and dales
And the clear streams of Helicon the tales
Of love-lorn deities to hear, ere 'gan
The sun thy dewy breath to steal ! Perchance
It was the soul of some Greek demi-god
Looked out thy glorious eyes and shed abroad
Its wonder-light; so god-like was the glance,
And so all tremulous with beauty thine
Enraptured notes.—And yet the world denied
Thy voice, until, triumphantly divine,
It rose from earth; nor heard, till Silence cried
Aloud with grief, th' immortal melody
Of a young life so soon by Death set free.

1896

SHELLEY

BRIGHT soul that wept for Adonais dead,
As for the passing of a world of song
And beauty known too late ! Thou wert among
The first of unbound Titans moved to tread
The dumb gloom with thy wingèd feet, and shed
The music of love's tears upon the throng,
Whom pride, dull-eyed and deaf, in ignorance long
Had held; and so their larger loss, instead
Of gain, reveal. Ah ! Thou didst hear the flight
Of that rare spirit past th' insensate earth,
Thrilling the void with rich melodious light,
Like some new star rejoicing at its birth;
And listening, rose up from the stormy sea
Forevermore to bear it company.

1896

• BYRON

GREAT soul of song ! Which for a changeful day,
Strong destiny lent to the earth, and held
In silken liberty to fret unquelled
By light, or love, or fame, or passion's sway,
Against the bars of gold. The world did say
That thou wert false—though living gloom compelled
The universe within thee, unexcelled,
To flash and burn before the sons of clay
In wondrous symphonies.

Yet still, the world,—
Forgetting her own darkness half the time,
And that the sun may show dull vapour curled
Around his orb—prude-like, doth mope and mime;
While the dark soul of Byron, soaring free
Through the long night, graspeth eternity.

1896

BURNS

HEART of the hills, breath of the moors, and voice
Of streams ! All o'er the world is heard the name
Of him who lo'ed ye well: His deathless fame
Circles on wings of love; and Scotland's choice
Is mine to-day. Dimly, as in a dream
Of thee, I follow in the wake of BURNS;
Softly, as in a trance, my spirit yearns
To catch the songs of hill, and moor, and stream:
Yet dream and trance are vain. Needs must
One be an eagle resting on his wings,
Or lay his longing spirit in thy dust,
Or be the mist above thy purling springs,
Ere he may fill his soul—an alien soul—
With strength to rise and seek thy Poet's goal !

1896

MILTON

POET ! To whom the day was deeper night,
When thy great soul upborne on mighty wings,
Saw, with rapt vision, still more glorious things
Than were vouchsafed to kingliest mortal sight;
And, soaring, smote the harp, with majesty
Of love and power sublime, to highest worth
Heard down the ages since old Homer's birth;
Milton ! Creation's God encompass'd thee
In that vast flight, with flaming Cherubim:
And though thou wert so old, and blind, and poor,
—And in such mis'ry to the wit of him,
Our England's Merrie Monarch, that he swore:
"God's Rood ! In mis'ry, let the beggar shift !"
Thou gav'st the world a precious god-like gift.

1896

CHATTERTON

NIGHT after night, in his mean, littered room,
The Bristol boy—whose ageless spirit sung
Of Ella and the Danes in feignèd tongue—
Stretched all his soul upon a wondrous loom;
And wrought old tapestries of love and doom,—
Until the stars were dimmed, and morning flung
Aloft red glory, and the lark upsprung,
And golden meads were dancing in their bloom.

O London, London ! whom proud Genius seeks
To conquer with the flaming ecstasy
That kens the heights of heaven and depths of hell !
Each nameless, trodden stone in Shoe Lane speaks
Of Chatterton in his starv'd agony,
Draining thy poison in an attic cell.

1912

AFTER READING TENNYSON'S MEMOIRS

A CHILD of nature close to nature's heart;
A man mighty with love of English earth;
A life of noble dignity and worth;
A name enduring while the world hath art.

Shakespeare and Milton were of him a part;
And he, with them, predestinate from birth,
A trilogy of greatness bodied forth
In English speech unrivalled in Time's mart.

England ! Thou mother of young nations held
In fealty by the grace of freedom's power !
Mistress of seas in right of wisdom's dower !

Van-leader of the age, by truth impelled !
Thou who, with love of truth, hast beauty won !
Thy fame is pledged anew in Tennyson.

1898

AFTER RE-READING EMERSON'S LIFE

O RADIANT mind ! and sweet as morning airs
In June, when sun-lit earth is glad with breath
Of glorious growth, and in rich fragrance bears
Its wealth of promise, fruitful even to death;
O heart of love, deep in the heart of life!
Prophet and seer of freedom's power and grace
In nature's and in man's unceasing strife
For progress in a world of time and place!
The Spirit's leaven in thee rejoiced and grew
Beyond mortality, and with the great,
Immortal names mingles, and spreads anew
The visions of the souls that conquered fate:—
Battles and triumphs to aspiring Youth;
And unto Age enduring love and truth.

1918

LONGFELLOW

Non clamor sed amor.

(*The Poet's Motto*)

ABOVE all others, in simplicity
Of song thou wert the poet of thy day;
And thou wert crowned with laurel and with bay
Unfading, for thy mellow minstrelsy
Of life and death; not for great ecstasy,
Nor "purple riot," nor the blinding ray
From heaven,—for none of these did seek to play
Upon thy soul tumultuous harmony.

Above all others, thou wert calm, serene;
Moving amid the clamor of a young
And strenuous nation like the quiet soul
Of peace and art; painting a half-world scene
With fire-side pictures; and thyself, among
The gazers, rapt in love's immortal scroll.

1907

AT THE GRAVE OF McPHERSON

An early Nova Scotian poet.

A SILENT lane with barrèd gates across,
—Thin vestige of a great road from the sea—
Holding, as by a thread, the memory
Of a brief dream of life and love and loss
And utter need, which to and fro did toss
A wan and feverish soul that yearned to be
An echo of some forest melody,
Or song of flowers budding beneath the moss.

And here, within this cattle-browsing ground,
The poet's grave of withered weeds is seen;
A wayside stone carved by the hand of love,
—All nameless else—clings to the trodden mound;
Yet, from the crushèd earth, an evergreen
Hath lately sprung to light and joy above.

1906

E. W THOMSON

THOUGH I have never seen thee face to face,
Nor heard thy voice, nor grasped thine outstretched
hand;

And may not ever, on this earthly strand,
Enjoy thy presence as a day of grace;
Yet thy unbounded heart enlargeth space
Within my heart. . . . Thy books are of the land
Of Truth and Beauty ever in demand,
And I'm their usurer in my treasure-place;
Thy honoured portrait shines above my hearth,
Delighting me with friendship, at each gaze;
And my life groweth rich in aftermath,
With al' thy letters fragrant of sweet praise
And kind regard for me,—one of a throng
Thy love hath lifted up and cheered along.

1918

CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS

BARD of the wind-swept marsh and surging tide !
The winds of Heaven sweep o'er thy soul, and rare
Sweet melodies swell out upon the air
In Divers Tones, resounding far and wide.

Poet of Common Days ! Thy songs, they glide
O'er Labour's field, greeting the toilers there
With benediction and with low-voic'd prayer,
That in their hearts shall evermore abide.

And in thine Avè, like an evening star,
—That pure white soul escaped from dying day—
Thou broodest o'er belovèd Tantramar;

Discerning, in its tide's tumultuous sway,
A Spirit, rushing from the stormy sea,
Defying Death throughout Eternity.

1897

PASTOR FELIX

Rev. Arthur John Lockhart.

POET and Pastor, of the happy heart !
Anointer of the eyes with dawn of day,
And helper of the lame along the way,
And of the needy poor in mammon's mart:
Me, also, thou hast blessèd with thine art;—
Thy songs, wherein young love and beauty play;
Thy memories, delighting so to stray
In Acadie, from which thou canst not part.

In my blithe morn, it was another joy
To hear thine and thy brother's minstrelsy,
Rich in the genius of thy native land,
And, now,—forgetful of the world's annoy—
At close of day, how beautiful to me,
Thy hymns of praise upon the neighbouring strand.

1919

ROBERT NORWOOD

MASTER upon the many-stringèd lute !
Whose melodies of love and beauty's song,
Whose harmonies of life, thy notes prolong
With echoing sweetness ! Thou dost leave me mute
With praise, too great for my thin-piping flute
To sound thine honours to the choral throng
Of those bright lyrists whom thou art among,
And from whom thou may'st claim a bard's salute.

Master and Friend ! Forgive the failure, here,
Of wither'd lips upon a hollow reed !
Some lack hath stilled for me the little art
I once could use to charm the inward ear;—
Yet, had I any song to fit thy meed,
Thou hast it now, since thou hast all my heart.

1919

TO MISTRESS PHILIP MOORE

On receiving her sonnet addressed to me.

LADY ! I thank thee for thy wealth of praise:
Fortune, indeed, hath smiled ! when, from my heart,
Some little glow reveals thy happy art
Of trailing beauty over barren ways.
Truly, thou leavest me in such a maze
Of undeservèd riches, that I start !—
So my bedimmed, night-loving eyes do smart
With keenest pleasure filling all their gaze . . .

Once on a time, a vagrant of the earth
Stretched himself out beneath a linden shade,
And drowsed awhile, and had a pleasant dream:
Doubtless, upon his face, a wandering gleam
Of golden sunlight glanced, and 'round him played,—
And gave to him a momentary worth.

1919

JOSEPH HOWE

*A sonnet to his statue in the Province Building Square
at Halifax, Nova Scotia.*

CAST in heroic mould, thou standest there,
Firm as the native rock beneath thy feet:
Tempest and blazing sun upon thee beat;
Thou welcomest them with head erect and bare.
To thee, beyond earth's storms, the heavens are fair;
And thy far-seeing eyes the light doth meet;
And thy prophetic lips forever greet
Thy country's greatness, in the vision rare.
Unweariedly, thine outstretched hand bestows
Imperial benediction:—For all time,
Largess of Freedom to the passer-by;
The mighty Liberty to do and die
For Living Peace; the Victory sublime;
And—after death—the Crown of Love, from foes.

1910

WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON

FROM fairest fields he turned aside to see
A burning bush,—why it was not consumed,—
And in that vision saw his soul illumed,
And, trembling, heard a voice speak mightily:
“Draw not nigh hither, but put off thy shoes
From off thy feet, for this is holy ground !
I am thy God whom thou hast sought and found !
I have inflamed thy soul, that thou may'st use
Love's piercing word to rend the nation's will !
And though the rulers strive against the might
Of my Almighty Love,—Yea, though until
My Angel pass, and in a blood-stained night
All first-born die,—They shall set free the slave;
And thou shalt make a people's heart thy grave !”

1899

"FATHER" COSSMANN

Lutheran Clergyman for Lunenburg County.

WRITE, henceforth blessed are the dead which die
In the Lord: Ev'n so, the Spirit saith, for they
Rest from their labours. Thus we feel and say
Of sainted Cossman, who lived ever nigh
His Lord:—Forsaking proven claims to high
Renown in Learning's seats; putting away
All thoughts of worldly fame in youth's proud day;
Renouncing Father-land for a far cry
Of souls beyond the sea hard-pressed for aid;
Toiling so long an exile for his Lord;
Bearing so well the holy burden laid
Upon his soul to preach the Living Word
Unto the people here; doing his best
For love of man, not gold. . . . He gained God's Rest.

1897

THE MORNING GLORY

In memoriam Bertha L. Simonson.

INTO a Garden, soft, a Shadow stole
And looked upon a flower,—the loveliest there.
It was a Morning Glory, bright and fair,
Uplifting to the sun its yearning soul,
Seeking more light and life while yet 'twas day;
Drinking such beauty from the earth and sky,
The Rose and Lily made a bower close by,
And sang that night and death were passed away.

The Shadow nearer crept, then sweetly smiled,
And lo ! the spirit of that flower was free,
And all the air was hush'd, as if beguiled
By some most subtle, dreamlike mystery.
—Perchance it was an Angel in disguise !
For now the flower doth bloom in Paradise.

1894

AWAKE, MY GLORY

In memoriam, Fletcher Bath Wade.

LOVE'S amaranth for him !—the friendliest soul,
In whose large shadow every heart had glee;
So was he dowered with richest sympathy
And all-compelling might of love's control;
So strong, so winsome !—and the shining goal,
And proud acclaim, and the high prize to be,
All waiting ! when, came woful pageantry,
With death, and fading wreaths, and bells that toll.

Out of my carthly gaze the glory died;
And I was long while 'mong the tombs, forlorn,
Ere time grew merciful and tears were dried:
But now, upon a hill, I wait the morn.
"Awake, my Glory ! Lute and harp awake !"
O soul, be jubilant !—soon the day will break.

1912

COMPENSATIONS

In memoriam, Rev. Dr. White.

THERE is no time but some rare spot of earth
Is dulled forever by a passing cloud;
No moment, but some mourner moans aloud
In deeper darkness,—groping after worth,
And finding only a cold mound of clay,
Instead of ready hands and glowing heart,
And voice attuned to love's diviner art,
And eyes reflecting more than light of day.

And yet, how large our compensations here !
Beyond earth's gloom, weak human sight may gaze
Upon a universe of worlds ablaze
With glory; and faith's vision, grown more clear,
May see with closed eyes God's all-wise plan,
When death's night compasses a Christ-like man.

1898

THE DIAMOND JUBILEE OF QUEEN VICTORIA

I

"She wrought her people lasting good."

BELOVED Queen: Who, by the Grace of God,
Hast worn an earthly crown for sixty years !
Victoria: Who amongst thy Royal Peers,
Art Nobly First ! With universal laud,
Honour, and love to-day throughout this broad
Dominion of the West, each heart reveres
Thy name; and hearty are the loyal cheers
For thee, whose worth the Brave and Wise applaud.

With cherished zeal a Sunlit Empire owns
Thy sway, and all thy people's lasting good
Doth crown thy life:—Not with earth's precious stones,
But with this fruitful Prayer, each day renewed:
God bless our Queen ! And grant, at last, that she
May wear the Crown of Heaven's Felicity.

1897

THE DIAMOND JUBILEE OF QUEEN VICTORIA

II

"The bounds of freedom wider yet."

VICTORIAN age ! Proud epoch of a name !
Recurrent cycle of a life renewed,
Expanded, and uplifted till the brood
Of thought in children hungers after fame !
Earth, air, and all the elements aflame
With mighty force, and time and space subdued
By infant finger tips: the world bestrewed
With wonders, and th' eternal stars grown tame !

The Good have dreamed of Thee as that great dawn
Of man's Millenium, when the breathing soul
Shall feel its true Divinity, and Scorn
Of God shall yield to Love's supreme control.
This much we know: Thou art the gathered might
Of efforts to fulfil the Law of Light.

1897

FOR EMPIRE DAY

VAST and sublime creation of a race
Of mighty conquerors in war and peace !
Great heritage of fame, that shall not cease
To triumph, while Britannia's Statesmen place
The truth above all pride of power ! The space
Thou fillest now in history, ancient Greece
And Rome, each in her turn, of Time held lease;
And lo ! The palimpsest, hardly a trace
Of either Empire, shows. Yet Homer reigns,
And Plato and Justinian dominate;
These still endure, though all man's earthly gains
In war and peace Time doth obliterate:
The Imperial Mind, alone, is Empire's core;
And Greatness lives, where Love rules evermore.

1898

THE BUST OF CICERO

THERE is a great foreboding in thine eyes,
And on thy lips a sad, unuttered thought;
As if the vision of thy soul were fraught
Long time, with shadow of the last surprise.
O yearning exile ! There, before thee, lies
The road to Rome. But ah ! thine ears have caught
The clatter of the hoofs of death unsought;
And slowly in thy litter thou dost rise.

Out of thy pain and weakness strength came forth;
And with majestic gaze upon thy doom,
Thou renderedst unto Cæsar's slave thy head.
Down sank the glory and the pride and worth;
The sun of liberty was set; the gloom
Of lustful centuries began to spread.

1912

CALPURNIA'S DREAM

“O MY dear lord, go not from me, I pray !
Last night—ah, dreadful dream !—thy spirit sighed
Farewell, and all my widowed soul was plied
With piteous scene. It was thy murdered clay !
And thy sad ghost was borne on streaming ray
To Heaven; and my heart-broken body tried
To reach to it, and woke to darkness wide.
O leave me not in utter woe this day !”

But Brutus came ! And Cæsar rose, and went
Unarmed, alone, into the Judgment Hall:—
The pleading stranger's scroll he hath not read . . .
And now, in the pale dusk, through streets that lent
A ghostly silence, servants bear a pall
Home to Calpurnia, waiting—for her dead.

1912

SUNRISE IN SUMMER

IN yonder lovely vale, sweet trysting place
For fairies, nature sleeps in dreamy calm.
A light as gentle as ethereal balm,
In misty rapture plays about her face;
The eager waiting winds forget to sigh,
And from her love-expectant lips inhale
The breath of roses; and the stars grow pale,
As the red-flushing, ardent dawn draws nigh,
With softest step, to steal a tender kiss.
The beauty dreamer stirs; the airy way
Is lit with spears of gold, and forward press
In haste the splendid chivalry of day.
With trumpet and with song the echoes ring:
All nature is awake, and greets her King.

1892

SUNSET REVERIE

I SAW the day go down beyond the hills,
Flinging his gorgeous mantle in the air,
For night—sweet tender-eyèd night—to wear
Upon her tawny bosom as she wills.
And lo ! in melting hues, with daffodils
Peeping from either side her wreathèd hair,
And coronal of golden crescent rare,
Night comes array'd, and earth with beauty fills.

The lyric cry of bird, the peal of bell,
The softly sighing whisper of the wind:
I hear them call as in a blessed dream.
God's peace, that passeth any words to tell,
Flows all around; the world is left behind;
My soul is drifting—drifting—with the stream.

1907

PEACE

A Phantasy.

THE world was hush'd in silence of the night,
And I sat musing wearily alone,
Beside a hearth on which the red beams shone
In weirdest forms,—as if some burning sprite
Were agonizing in the glowing heat,—
When suddenly the embers paler grew,
And from their quiv'ring ashes swiftly flew
A radiant dove, which I did so entreat,
It fluttered down and nestled on my breast;
And there its warm heart softly puls'd with mine,
And gave my tired soul such sense of rest
And blessedness, I deemed the bird divine:
—Yet, when with tender hand I would caress,
Lo ! 'twas a lambent flame in fancy's dress.

1893

DISILLUSION

HERE, where the tireless tide croons ceaselessly
Over the rocks, where wandering sea-gulls rest
Their wings, and the sand-piper has its nest,
Here would I linger, while my day is free;
Breathing the brine borne landward from the sea,
Dreaming perhaps the golden age was best,
When toil and care were hidden in the breast
Of earth, and life was unreality.

But yonder is Fort Point; the quaint old town
Shaded by stately trees; the wharves with here
And there a vessel moored; and, drifting down
The stream and out to sea, with song and cheer,
Bold voices of to-day—that yestermorn
Out of eternity were yet unborn.

1894

MY FOUNTAIN PEN

A gift from R. MacD. my early chum.

THOU golden token of a cherished friend !
Free-flowing fountain pen ! Boon, oft desired
By writers toiling over-late, and tired
Of rusting nibs, and dippings without end !
Grateful, indeed, it is, through thee to send
My thanks unto the giver; the admired,
The loved, the trusted one; who, heart inspired,
Doth minister where pain and sorrow rend.

Dear Robert: Time has flown. And yet, to me,
'Tis ages since we met, and grasping hands,
The light of other days shone joyously,
And we were careless of the hours' commands:
For it was always morning with us then;—
But now the stars are coming into ken.

1905

NO MONEY'S WORTH

To see a world in a grain of sand,
And a heaven in a wild flower;
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand,
And eternity in an hour.

William Blake.

THOU grain of sand ! In thee, mine eyes behold
A world within the universe of God:
No longer dark to me, thou shed'st abroad
Some of that light which burst through chaos old.
And thou wild flower ! Surely, thou dost unfold
A heaven of love and beauty in a clod
Of common clay, past which I often trod,—
Thinking of naught else but my lack of gold . . .

How often do we hold infinity
Within our outstretched, waiting palm, and fail
To see more than a vantage-coin of earth !
How many unknown hours eternity
Slips through the miser-fingers, while we rail
At time that hath for us no money's worth !

1911

AT PLEASANT RIVER

HOW pleasant were it, if my stream of days
Were no more troubled than this river's flow.

The current, widening here, is deep and slow,
And on its quiet strength the sunlight plays;
Yet there is foam that tells of stony ways

Above the river's bend; and far below,

The shadows claim it, where the alders grow
Upon their oozy beds in leafy maze.

'Round me the radiant meadow-grasses lean;

And to the hearts of flowers the wild bee brings

A greater joy than any it shall glean;

Here, too, the swallows come and dip their wings;

And in a lonely tree, a robin sings.

His sweetest melody of love, unseen.

1902

A CONTRAST

LONG days of freedom from the city's glare,
And nights of sleep and dream 'neath heaven's space;
The soul and body clean of evil's trace,
The beauty of creation everywhere. . . .
And they return with sunlight in their hair,
And in their eyes the stars have dwelling-place,
And the young morn hath given them heart of grace,
And eve the soul of song, and night the prayer.

But ah ! The world-drugged sleepers. . . . They arise,
And break their empty fast and hurry forth;
And none of them hath song or heavenly rage:
There is no pity in their ravening eyes;
Their mouths can utter naught but money's worth;
Their hands seem ever clutching mammon's wage.

1913

THE VAGRANT

WHAT mattered it that Fortune passed him by
With curious, knowing look !—as if to say:

“Here is a vagabond of dreams by day;
A roysterer of the night with visions high;
A babbler of the gods when wine is nigh;
A spendthrift who would fling my gold away;
And flout my wisdom of the world in play,
And stake me for the pity of a sigh.”

He never knew when Fortune looked no more,
And left him—as not worth another thought—
To trudge the roads and haunt the woods and clears,
Sun-warmed and star-led through the vagrant years;
From spring to fall Love yielded all he sought,
And when the winter came he was not poor.

1913

THE WAY OF LIFE

(*A Dream.*)

I SAW them with their love-enraptured eyes,
And eager, parted lips that yearned to tell
The wondrous happiness, in which they dwell
Whom love hath perfected in sacrifice. . . .
But I could only call to them in sighs
Laden with mem'ries, unforgettable,
Of love for each dear soul I knew so well;—
So many times each one helped me to rise.

Earth-bound I lay: Yet glorious was the light !
Suffusing all my being with content
In dream of love on earth and joy of heaven;
Wherein I saw the freedom and the might
Of hard-pressed souls, exulting as they went
The Way of Life,—forgiving and forgiven.

1913

OLD AGE

TELL me," I asked of one in years grown old,
—One who had drunk his fill of life's rich wine,
And now in ruddy ease, cheerful, benign,
Sat toying with a cup of faded gold,—
"Tell me, by all the memories that enfold
Thee close,"—like as the clinging, clustering vine
Doth round an agèd oak its tendrils twine,—
"Carest thou once more to drink the vintage bold ?"

He, answering, said: "Life's splendid day is done.
And yet,—to live it o'er were utter pain !
If one I drank to could not share with me."
The after-glory of the setting sun
Lit up his eyes. I looked in them again,
And thought an angel face smiled wistfully.

1913

THE DAY LABOURER

HE hath gone to his home under the hill;—
His little plot of ground, nigh to a lake
Of fragrant lily-blooms which sleep and wake
And toil not, and yet dwell in beauty still;—
And there are flowers upspringing from the sill
Of earth about the house of olden make
His father used, where, doubtless, he doth take
The night's sweet rest that knows not any ill.

From early morning, he had toiled and striven
For others,—but the work was left undone
Which he had anguished for and longed to do.
Yet he went home in joy,—like he were shriven
Of failure, and his soul had surely won
Some lasting triumph for the morrow's view.

1917

And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew . . .
and heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden and hid
themselves amongst the trees of the garden.—*Genesis iii: 7 and 8.*

SPIRIT of Beauty !—which art everywhere
Love's glorifying ministrant of God—
When Man awoke, and rose up from the clod
In fear and wonder, thou wert brooding there;
Thou wert in sun, moon, stars, and light and air,
The vast and lonely sea, the earth untrod,
And every creature, and in all didst laud
And magnify the Maker's love and care . . .

The gorgeous serpent underneath the tree,
Peering around with subtle, gleaming eyes,
His sinuous, mottled coils 'gan to unroll;—
And Man, struggling with beasts and savagery
In that long, reddening dawn, grew human-wise,
—And found God's Love and Beauty in his soul.

1918

THE MORTALITY OF THE YEARS

WHEN in the morning I awake to light,
Opening my eyes to see another day:—
Ere fancy hath bestirred itself to flight,
For that my soul is heavy 'neath the clay;
The sadness of the grave hath me in thrall,
And human life like any other seems,
And mortal death appears the end of all,
And immortality a thing of dreams:
And then, I think upon the toll of years;—
How all the wine of life hath run to lees,
And all my fiery zeals and hopes and fears
Have faded into twilight memories,
And, one by one, my little graces fled,
Past any resurrection of the dead.

1918

THE IMMORTALITY OF LIFE

O LIFE immortal !—wed with mortal death,
To bud and bloom and fade as mortal life,
And thus, to vanish in a sighing breath,
Impelled to changing forms in changeless strife.
Art thou, to mortal vision, imaged heed
Of God ? or waking dream ?—and death so real,
The dreamer crieth: *Death is life's high meed*,
And more intense than any fame's appeal.
Yet fame and death are only alien worth
To dwellers in the flesh, avid of dower.
But love, O love !—that to the meek of earth
Giveth life's beauty, truth, freedom, and power—
Love is the meed of immortality,
Beyond forgotten death and memory.

1919

FAILURE

I STOOD upon the bridge at close of day,
And saw a vision of another world.
Mountains of shining gold and silver hurled
Against a crimson sky; valleys that lay
In purple ease; and stretching far away,
Vast yellow plains, and amber seas that curled
In waves of light; and ships with sails unfurled,
As misty islands in a dreamy bay.

Yet, as I gazed, mine eyes seemed dimmed with age;
My spirit heavy 'neath the night wind's breath;
And, through the gathering gloom, the silent rage
Of years undone came from the sea of death
To meet me there—and Time was lost to me
With all its wealth of opportunity.

1894

TO SLEEP

O GENTLE spirit of eternity !
To whose sweet influence weary mortals yield;
Eager to shut from sight the fairest field,
And, utterly, to sink the soul in thee !
Thou blessed tide that floweth from love's sea !
Infinite compassion is in thee unseal'd;
In thee, all griefs are lost, all wounds are heal'd,
And death is silent, dreamless ecstasy.

When my last day on earth draws to its end,
And light is failing, and strange shadows gloom,
And I shall turn me, feebly, to the wall,
O, comfort me in mercy, Sleep ! and lend
Thy spirit to my soul, until the doom
Of death be past, and life is all in all.

1907

THE VALLEY OF LA HAVE

SWEET, winsome vale ! where beck'ning waters glide
With lilt of life and venture to the sea;
And where the wooded hills caressingly
Bend over town and farm and river-side;
Long hast thou had my heart of love and pride !—
And listening to thy songs of industry,
My hopes are radiant for the years to be;
And faith enriches all the vision wide.

Thou hadst great lovers, too, in olden days:—
Here Champlain dreamed awhile of glorious fame,
And Razilly found all his meed of earth;
And, haply, here, the thought of far-off praise
Soothed Denys, as he wrote thy wave-sung name
Unto the pioneers of peaceful worth.

1912

THE BELLS OF MILTON

"But for those first affections,
Those shadowy recollections,
Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain-light of all our day,
Are yet a master-light of all our seeing;—
Wordsworth.

THE bells of Milton in the quiet air:
Oft in my boyhood days I heard them peal.
And I remember how they seemed to steal
Into my heart, and leave a sweetness there;—
Perchance to grow into a song or prayer
Of needed grace, when ruthless fate would deal
The scarring wounds time cannot wholly heal,
Nor yet the world forget to lay them bare.

Ring on, ye bells ! The sound is sweet to me,
That wakens in my heart a tenderness
Of youth, untouched by the relentless years:
The heave and surge and brooding of the sea,—
The day of joy, and night of grief and tears,
The wondrous dawn of love that seeks to bless.

1912

A VALENTINE

To my Daughter.

SWEET Valentine ! My sweet Saint Valentine !
True lovers' patron saint of thou and years !
I come with rosary of jewelled tears,
To tell my secret heart before thy shrine.
O, hear my being's prayer, Saint Valentine !
And ease my heart of all those jealous fears
That cruel absence brings to lovers' ears;
And filling it with rapturous love divine,
O seal it in love's missive sweet with myrrh
And kisses born of this thy festal day,
And bear it on thy radiant wings to her,
My life ! My all ! My sweetheart, far away !
So when she opens it, the dear surprise
Of love shall kindle in my darling's eyes.

1905

THE LOVER'S RHAPSODY

YE stars that crown the tresses of the night
With myriad gems ! O ye are pale and cold
Beside the loveliness that doth enfold
The majesty of Her who is my Light !
And thou chaste orb of heaven arrayed in white,
Enveil thy face ! Else thou wert over bold !
My loved one's beauty is of virtue's mould,
More pure than driven snow to mortal sight !
Thou too, O Sun !—from whom the shadows flee—
Thy glory is outshone by Her dark eyes !
One glance from Her, and Love doth ravish me
With Joy, and the whole earth is Paradise !
And richest bloom of rose and breath of myrrh
And song of bird are borrowed all from Her !

1894

TO A MAYFLOWER

HATH the rude laugh of Boreas frightened thee,
My dainty one, that thou hast sought to hide
Thy loveliness from the young Spring, whose bride
Thou art, and, like a novice, ecstasy
Of life renounce, in this dark monast'ry
Of mossy cells ? Nay, my pale beauty, chide
Me not, that I have mocked thy holy pride
With ardent praise of so rare modesty !
For I am come to claim thee, pretty flower,
As a sweet solace for my lady's eyes—
That thou—thy vigil past—all in a bower
Of love, may'st blush and bloom in glad surprise;
Happy, that, unawares, thy worth was known,
And all thy fragrance saved for Love alone.

1894

VIOLETS

SWEET little fairies of the childhood days
Of summer, little elves in white and blue,
Trooping the pastures and the meadows through,
Or else along by verdant roadside ways !

Why, prithee, so down-cast with soft amaze ?
—While the warm sunbeams, bringing love to you
I' the morning time, vie with the gentle dew,
To deck your drooping heads with jewelled sprays—

Why only sigh with faintest perfume rare ?
Are you not heralds of a gorgeous train,
To follow as the Summer grows more fair,
And life gets bold with luxury again ?—
And yet, such artless modesty is right;
For you are childhood's wonder and delight.

1894

REMINISCENCE

DEAR faded flowers ! Fond emblems of twin souls
That somewhere in a lost eternity
Drifted apart, until mortality
Reclaimed them ! Ah, how like a dream unrolls
The past its memories ! And how unseen goals
Of life and love are by strange destiny
Made plain, and all the deeper mystery
Of law reveals itself in living scrolls !

Awhile on you the sun his smiles bestowed,
And on your purple petals dew-gems glowed,
And you each passing wind some fragrance lent:
But ah ! I know that when love came and blent
Your separate lives into a posie sweet,
You in each other were again complete.

1894

EVENING AT PINEHURST

(South Brookfield.)

THE breeze that called the dawn is quiet now,
Save for a drowsy sigh among the pines;
The lake, as a rose-tinted mirror, shines
Between the lattice of the leaf and bough;
An elfin light is on the dark hill's brow,
And fairy shadows haunt the forest shrines;
The timid hare leaps to the sheltering vines;
The owl on noiseless pinion flitteth low.

At last thou comest, all-embracing night !
Invisible dissolver of earth's bounds !
Gentle deliv'ress of the cabin'd soul !
O, in what freedom doth the dream delight,
That with thee rangeth far beyond the rounds
Of mortals stumbling towards a mortal goal.

1907

THE PASSING OF AUTUMN

THESE are the festal days, wherein the earth,
With crowning glory and imperial air
Of life fulfilled, exulteth that she bare
Such large increase of happiness and worth:
The ample barns are crowded to their girth,
With riches of the fields all garnered there;
And out among the vines and orchards fair,
The luscious fruit is plucked with busy mirth.

The summer with its passion song has flown;
And the cold herald of a ruthless king
Has left his shadow on the shrinking ground;
Soon, soon, the saddened winds will sob and moan,
And earth will beat her breasts,—until the Spring
Shall come again, and love once more abound.

1907

TO THE MOON

FAIR Moon, that riseth, regal-orbed and golden,
To mingle in the last sweet dream of day !
Great Dian ! Goddess of the Forest olden,
Whose gracious benediction hunters pray !
Divine Selene ! Who, in bliss, wast folden
With young Endymion, while he sleeping lay !
And who, in misty Alba, didst embolden
The heart of Keats with rapturous ecstasy !

Not since that radiant mortal laid him down,
Upon the cold hill-side to dream of thee,
Hast thou been left, uncomforted, to brood:—
So waxeth thou in love, that thou art grown
To bless the vagrant haunting, near, to see
Thy beauty gleaming through a leafy wood.

1907

INDIAN SUMMER

THE red and gold of birch and maple tree
Which shed a glory o'er the evergreen,
The rich brown tint of oak, the yellow sheen
Of beech, were but as memories dear to me.
The night-winds moaned and raved through forests drear,
The earth was wet with tears of stormy grief,
And nature, full of pain, craved that relief
Which death, the last and saddest solace here,
Doth bring. . . . But now, enraptured is the air !
A tender radiance bathes the stricken earth;
The winds are lulled to sleep, and music rare
I heard: To me it seems the second birth
Of nature's soul,—a dream of paradise
Vouchsafed belovèd nature ere she dies.

1887

COME LET US HASTE TO BETHLEHEM

COME, let us haste to Bethlehem this day,
And give unto the Christ-child of our store
Of treasured gold and frankincense and myrrh,
We all have gathered up along the way:
The Angel of the Lord, with glorious ray
Hath thrilled the dawn; the earth is all astir
With heavenly tidings unto rich and poor:
Glory to God, Peace and Good-will for aye.

Lord, some are old and blind that come to thee;
And some are lame and halt and yet are glad;
And some are nigh to death and are not sad:
Not one of these but gave sweet charity
Of heart and hand, that e'en the least of them
Might worship Christ to-day in Bethlehem.

1911

O TO BE WITH THE CHILD

O TO be with the Child on Christmas morn,
So we may see the glory of the Lord,
And hear the shining host, with sweet accord,
Proclaim the tidings of a Saviour born !
And thence to go among the souls forlorn,
Where still the light is dark, the song unheard,
And bless them every one with loving word,
And leave them glad with wine and oil and corn !

Or if we come, as wise men from afar,—
Laden with all earth's costliest offering,
And guided by the splendour of a star—
To find the Christ and worship Him as King !
O may through us the golden gates unbar,
And many a weary one with rapture sing !

1912

THE STAR OF CHRIST

O STAR, that led the wise men of the East,
With royal gifts of gold and incense rare,
Unto a babe in David's city, cradled there,
In the rude manger of a burden'd beast!
Art thou now leading prophet, ruler, priest,
Into some lowly place, some hovel bare,
To find a little child and crown him Heir
Of God,—whose Kingdom dwelleth in the least ?

O risen Star ! O blessed cheering Ray,
To those in darkness and in awful need !
Thou Guider of our feet to Perfect Peace !
Shine in our hearts, O Christ, and purge away
The night of death and hell, of lust and greed !
O Christ, the world, Barabbas, doth release !

1906

THE CRUCIFIXION

UPON a dreary hill, three crosses loom
Against the darken'd sky; and on them hang
Three naked forms, to suffer there till pang
Of mortal agony fulfils their doom.
The outer ones are nameless, common thieves.
The other is THE CHRIST: He wears a crown
Of thorns, and drops of bloody sweat roll down
The face that majesty of death achieves.
A guard of soldiers gamble for his coat;
And him the priests and rabble mock and jeer.
There are a few sad, weeping women near;
While far away, The Chosen wait about.
—At length, from His dead, piercèd side streams forth
The blood-and-water of eternal worth.

1906

MARY MAGDALENE

At Easter-tide

SHE could not sleep nor wait the light of day,
But very early rose, and through the gloom
Hasten'd with sweetest off'rings, to the tomb
Where her belovèd Lord and Saviour lay.
Behold ! the heavy stone was rolled away—
The grave was empty—splendour filled the room:
"He is not here ! The Lord hath conquered doom !
Come see the place !" she heard the angels say.

But, blind with tears, she all forlorn, dismayed.
Went crying: "They have tak'n away my Lord,
And I know not—know not—where he is laid !"
And O, the gladness to her heart restored !
When One she asked where they had borne Him said:
"Mary !"—and she turned at that impassioned word.

1912

THE NEW YEAR

WHAT does it mean ? And musing thus, I see
A child close to a pictured window-pane
Breathing the frost away: And down the lane,
A group of boys and girls in romping glee
Dash through the open gate: And merrily
The pealing bell ushers a bridal train
From yonder church: And memory lives again
The golden past. Ah, surely unto me,
The white-robed herald of a new-born year
Cometh with gifts of wonder, joy, and love,
And hope, and faith, and peace, as I draw near
The valley and the shadow which shall prove
My soul ! And turning to the common things
Of life revealed this day, my glad heart sings.

1905

TO THE SEA

O MIGHTY Sea, born of Almighty Power
Whose Spirit moves thee ! Thou who art a scourge
So terrible in wrath, yet in thy dower

Of peace yielding to all, and kind to urge
With all-sufficient strength the frailest life
In thy vast depths ! Thou whose eternal dirge

Rollest upon earth's answering shores the strife
Of raging elements, or the sad song
Of pity for the dead, while there is rife

In many a home, from which a dear one long
Delays, anguish of love without surcease !
O hear the mother's cry, and be her strong

Deliverer ! Let her tears thy wrath appease:
And bring the lov'd one home for her heart-ease.

1902

TO M. P. H.

IT was a happy chance that drew us here,
To settle down and earn a heritage
In this fair vale, where nature doth engage
The contemplative heart with beauty's cheer;
Where industries have gathered people near,
And grace of work hath more than living wage,
And friendship's worth is not in equipage,
And there is thoughtful growth from year to year.

We love this home: Yet, often, when we meet,
The old town by the sea, where we were boys,
Singeth within our hearts an old refrain . . .
The very way you walk along the street
Stirs the faint fragrance of some early joys,
And sets me dreaming of my youth again.

1919

TO C. M.

FROM me, this greeting to your splendid youth
And richer manhood: I can see you now,
Coming to meet me, and your thoughtful brow
And shining eyes eager with freedom's truth !
For we were fellows of a *little town*
By *river and seashore*, and bosom friends;
Read the same books; dreamed, too, of glorious ends,
And told our visions of ambition's crown.

Long years ago, we went our separate ways:
And you grew strong with steady toil, and gained
Plaudits and prizes shared among the great.
Yet never failed your friendship or your praise !
Never a difference to be explained ! . . .
Ever the worth in you raised my estate.

1917

TO C. W. T.

OUR friendship, failing never, through the years,
Hath linked our souls beyond the body's care !
And we have common thoughts greater than fears,
And long have comforted the last despair.
We loved the joys of Spring and Summer well;
And, in the lasting life that love imparts
To knowledge, have thick-sown the asphodel,
And fed with love the memories of our hearts.
And though the Winter comes with drifting snows,
And lack of sunlight makes the earth so cold,—
The stars are nearer; and the road that goes
From house to house is short, and known of old.
Dear Friend ! I'll come to you, and you to me;—
To talk and laugh awhile,—or *silent be*.

1915

TO A. R.

(On his 50th anniversary)

ON this, thy day of grace and jubilee
Of years of striving up the hills of light,
Greeting ! And praise for valiant victory
And freedom of the self and growth of might !
And may full many gracious years be thine,
Of wealth and power of radiant word and deed
In service unto others, which shall shine
For earth's remembrance and thy heavenly meed !
"The best is yet to be":—so sang the seer
In bardic ecstasy, his triumph song
Of soul and body's worth and purpose here,
And man's belief that God will right the wrong.
And so, out of a heart of praise, I send
This little gift of verse to thee, My Friend.

1918

H. T. R.

HE hath an Orphic quality in him,—
An ageless charm that calleth forth the best;
Rare love, and kindly, generous warmth and zest
Of friendliness; humour that doth not dim;
And light that spreadeth far beyond the rim
Of earthly hope and joy, in work and rest;
And quiet harmony,—true to the test
Of living service, welling at the brim.

So, doth the friend of half a life-time draw
My memory after him in gratitude,
My heart cannot forego this breath of praise
Upon a little pipe of oaten straw,
I now and then take up in musing mood,—
Among the harvesters of happy days.

1919

TO T. B. A. A

DEAR friend and kinsman: Greetings, here, from me,
And thanks again, for those rare days with you
In old La Have !—richer in memory's view,
Than other visitings will ever be;
The service there and down at Dublin Bay;
The evenings in the quiet parsonage,—
Music and talk, and turning o'er the page
Of verse, or sketches of some vivid day;
And then the morrow's idling on the shore,
And bathing in the cove—the hiding place
Of legendary pirates, long ago;—
Such simple happiness in days of yore,
The over laying years cannot efface,
Nor dim the beauty of the after-glow.

1919

TO A. P. S

DOST mind our walk upon a Sabbath day,—
Beyond the town, along the river-side—
Unto a village, where thou wert to bide
An hour among thy people, met to pray !
Being then, as now, a teacher of The Way;
Filled with the rushing, Pentecostal tide,—
Which all the lure of earth cannot divide
Or lessen in thine heart, or turn astray.

A pleasant memory, that Sabbath walk;
And yet, to me, a more than memory:
Having a timeless thought,—of journeying
Unto Emmaus, and the burning talk
Of One Who gave the two His company,
And supped with them, and left them marvelling.

1919

TO F. H

SIT near the fire, and light thy seasoned bowl,
Filled with the fragrant weed we both enjoy !
The evening is our own without annoy,
To smoke, and talk, and read, and rest the soul.
Doubtless, to some, ours is a narrow role;
And we seem failures in the world's employ,
Who often mixed our work with cheap alloy,
And went a-wandering, and missed the goal.

Well, let them have it so ! We still have health
That feareth not the world, what it can do;
And happiness, enough for quiet age,
In friends and books: And these are living wealth,
Whence we may draw the beautiful and true,
And love and freedom for a heritage.

1919

B. H. H.

LARGE-HEARTED man ! Full of fine friendliness
And courtesy of life, all radiant !
Revealing love, with modesty, intent
On doing good, and seeking how to bless:
Happy, am I, in having been a guest
At his fair island home,—that green retreat,
Where, with his charming ladies, he doth greet
His company, and give to them his best.

He came to my friend's forge, one summer's day,
—A gracious stranger, without errand there,—
And stayed for talk; and, thus, the hours were passed;
And both their hearts were light, in wondrous way;
And beautiful their friendship grew; and rare
The wealth of memories they have amassed.

June 26, 1919.

TO MY BROTHER ODDFELLOWS IN LODGE

HERE cometh youth and manhood each to learn,
In play of symbols, of immortal life
Emerging through the darkness, and at strife
With carnal powers armed with the lusts which burn
The body's temple in consuming fires,—
Leaving but ashes for the builder's years;
Nothing but ashes,—dry of human tears—
Though tombed in marble of the world's desires.

O Brothers, art is real beyond these walls,
And mostly selfish ! Yet, if Friendship lead
Some darken'd souls to light, where Love is shown
Giving the uttermost when weakness calls,
And seeking not for any other meed,—
Life shall be free, and Truth exalt the throne.

1917

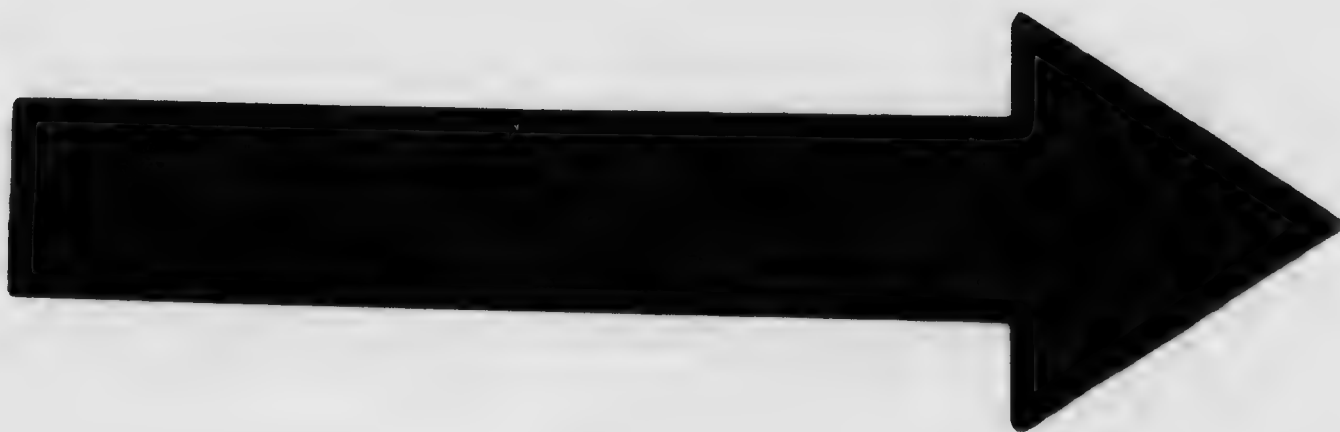
IV
MISCELLANIA

THE INNER LIGHT

MIDWAY this mortal life, across my path,
Which lay through tangled wood and gloomy shade,
A ray of light stole softly unawares;
And as I struggled on it hovered near,
Beguiling me with hope that cheered my heart
And gave me peace beyond the meed of earth.

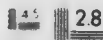
Methought it strange that it should seek in me
Companionship ! Wherefore, I searched my soul
For reason, and there found a light within
That flashed and thrilled me with a wondrous truth.

1894



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SUNSET DREAM

SO calm the scene and sweet the rest,
So soft the shadows gleam,
The earth and sky upon the breast
Of silent waters dream.

1895

TWILIGHT

GIVE me to drink of this pale opiate,
And let me lie beneath some drowsy tree,
And all my waiting soul shall grow elate
With dream of heaven and far-off melody.

1896

THE SURF

IT chanced upon a mistie summer's day
At No Man's Creek,
That I did peek
From my retreat, and see the Mermaids play
At hide and seek.

And O, a merrie romping school were they !
—Those Mermaids fair,
With streaming hair
Beflecked with coral foam and emerald spray
Of sea-gems rare.

1893

FATE

FATE says to me:
 "The tide is coming in,
O haste and write thy name upon the sand !"
Then leads me to the shore to try my hand,
 —Just as the tide is in—
And laughs in glee.

1893

FAITH

UPON the frozen earth deep lies the snow,
And leafless trees are shivering in the blast;
Yet underneath it all, and soft and low,
The loving heart of nature beateth fast.

So, too, when life seems dead and buried deep,
And desolated hopes bemoan their fate,
Far down within my quick'ning soul doth leap
A promise of the joy—for which I wait.

1896

AN INVITATION

O H come away, where, laughing, run
The little brooks, brimming with glee
At their release from Winter's hold !
Come where earth's beauty-dreams have won
From sleep a waking ecstasy !
Where the young hearts of flowers unfold
A loveliness untold
Of mortals, and the song of birds
Carolling life's joy so wins
The soul from miser memory
Of self ! And thou shalt feel the dear felicity
Of God's creation when the Spring begins,—
And learn to live, while time affords
A breathing space beyond the city hordes.

1897

SOUL-AND-BODY

A LONG the winding river's bound,
With only the unfaltering flow
Of tide to bear me silent company,
I wander, feeling, in the symphony
Of Nature here, a joy not found
In Art—where Art is all to know.

For, here, I am the substance of each form:
I am the wind, the wild rose blown,
The murmuring bees, the birds of song, the fantasy
Of wood and meadow, all the ecstasy
Of summer growth, the life full-grown,
The peace of soul-and-body after storm.

1897

FOR HEALING OF THE SOUL

A LONG a trail that wound into the heart
(O heart's delight !) of woods, saved from the mart,—
I pray, for memory's love, rather than gain
Of money for such nature-glory slain—
On such a trail, springing beneath the feet
With ardent life, I found an old retreat;
A brooding-place of flowers and singing birds,
A place for brooding thoughts richer than words;
Where one might slip the fancy, unafraid
Of wrath of man in sunlight or in shade.
O many a time I found God walking there,
Nor fled from Him because my soul was bare !—
And now, all travel-stained, covered with dust
Of warring ways and envious, worldly lust,
I come again into this quiet place,
For healing of the soul with nature's grace.

1916

A PRELUDE TO MY VALENTINE

WHEN Winter doth to Spring incline,
O what a Miracle !—to see
The icy waters turn to wine
And fill the shiv'ring Earth with glee.

MY VALENTINE

(To N. M. C.)

“O WON'T you be my Valentine ?
Won't you consider it ?” said she:
And straightway 'gan the Sun to shine
And search the Wintry heart of me.

Eftsoons, I prayed: O Love Divine !
Sith she hath asked so prettilie
For me to be her Valentine,
O grant thy Heart of Song to me !

MY VALENTINE

Down on my knees before Love's shrine,
I clasped my hands in ecstasie !
And whispered: "Love, the stars that shine
From her sweet eyes do beacon thee !"

And lo ! Love sends Saint Valentine
To bless her with a song from me;
A little lilt of love divine
To sing through all the years to be.

1917

A VALENTINE

From Grandpa

O ALLISON, My Allison !
My little girl, my sweetest one !
My heart is yours, and yours is mine;—
And both are in this Valentine.
And darling, I do love you so,
I wish you'd come, or I could go;
Or else that Winter cold were done,
And Spring had brought my Allison.

February 14, 1918.

To
Miss Allison Pattillo (5 years old)
Visiting at Ingenio Rio Cauto,
Oriente, Cuba.

AN EASTER EGG

DEAR Allison:

My sweetest one !

As Easter eggs are all the rage,
You'll find one on the inside page;

But as I made it with a pen,

You must not show it to a hen;
For if you do, she'll surely "Cluck,"
And then you'll have no Easter luck;

And Easter luck and Easter fun

Are what I wish for Allison.

GRANDPA.

1918

APRIL FOLLY

To a little maiden whose birthday accords with mine.
(H. Z.)

IF some rare clown
Of sweetest April folly
Gave us a crown
Of last year's faded holly,
That were a wiser fame
—A holier symbol far—
Than bloodiest trophy of the game
Of war.

April 1, 1917

THE VICTORY OF AGE

LET me not say,
Alack, the day !
I'm getting old and gray,
And only have, on this most beauteous earth,
A few more years of work and less of worth;

Nor let me rail,
Nor cringe and quail,
When lessening years shall pale
The world's ambitions to the wingèd soul,
And life grow alien to the body's goal.

THE VICTORY OF AGE

With joy and pain,
With loss and gain,—
Though marked with many a stain
And fallings often in a sorry plight,
While struggling on and upwards to the light,—

Some victory
Hath come to me,
Yielding sweet liberty
To lose the morbid self, and other weal
To seek, till utter loss shall love reveal:

The fearful stress
And bitterness
Of death shall less and less
Disturb the soul that, in Love's freedom, strives
To earn a little good for other lives.

1918

FREE RENDERINGS

From Prose Translations of Horace

Superior to envy, I will quit cities.

I shall continually be renewed
In the praises of posterity.
—*Horace.*

ON HIS OWN WORKS

I HAVE completed, thus, a monument
More durable than brass; and more sublime
Than regal height of pyramids, which time
Doth hold in reverence for their vast intent,
And centuries of warring element
Shall not despoil of their majestic prime,—
Though nevermore is heard the golden chime
Of Memnon when the light hath darkness rent.
As long as vestals feed the sacred ray
I shall not wholly die, but a great part
Of me shall 'scape Oblivion's ceaseless rage.
I, lowly born, exalt the poet's art,
And now am crowned by an Imperial age
With wreath of the unfading Delphic bay.

1913

THE FOURTH ODE

AT length the long cold winter melts away
Beneath the wooing spring and western breeze,
And round the ships the waters leap and play.
Nor do the cattle longer find their ease
In fold or stall, nor ploughmen care to loll
Beside the fire, nor whitened are the leas.
Now Venus, sprung from foaming waves, her role
Resumes, and 'neath the splendor of the moon

THE FOURTH ODE

Loos off the dance; and comely Graces troll
With laughing Nymphs, and beat delicious tune
With dainty feet upon the yielding ground;
While glowing Vulcan hurries, all too soon,
To fill the air with thunderous echoing sound
Of his laborious fires. 'Tis fitting now,
The radiant head of youth be lightly bound,
Either with myrtle verdant from the bough,
Or those sweet blushing flowers, all pink and white,
That with rich favour do the earth endow.
And it is fitting Faunus to delight
With solemn sacrifice of lamb or kid:
He guards the flocks upon the hills at night.
Alas ! pale Death, from whom no one is hid,

THE FOURTH ODE

Knocks at the cottage of the frugal poor
And at king's palaces, a guest unbid—
Yet each shall open unto him the door,
And give him of their all, or soon, or late.
O happy Sextius ! We ought not to store
Far distant hopes. For presently shall fate
Bind you with darkness and seal up the breath
Forever, and the phantom ghosts shall wait
Upon you in the underworld of death;
Where, having once arrived, you neither shall
Toss for the bottle, nor—so Pluto saith—
Admire the tender Lycidas, whom all
The youth of Rome pursue with ardent eye,
And for whom lovelorn maidens soon will sigh.

1904

A HYMN TO PAN

GOD of the sylvan shades,
And lover of the maids
That gleam through Arcady !

Great Pan, to whom the fields,
And fruits that summer yields,
Are thy protecting care !

Glance kindly o'er my farm
With thine unfailing charm,
And my young garden bless.

The laden year shall bring
Its choicest tenderling
To thee for sacrifice;

A HYMN TO PAN

The richest loving-cup
That love doth offer up
Shall always be refilled;

And every smoking grove,
Its gratitude shall prove
To thee, O Guardian Pan !

All the sleek cattle feed
Knee-deep in grassy mead,
At thy glad festival;—

A HYMN TO PAN

The grateful holiday,—
When men and beasts are gay.
And little lambs are brave;

When woods, for thee, do shed
Their leaves of gold and red,
Wherever thou dost roam;

And labourers are free
To dance with hearty glee
Upon the hated ground.

1913

IN PRAISE OF A COUNTRY LIFE

HAPPY the man ! By all the gods approved !
Who, from the cares of business far removed,
In simple manner of the o'den race
Of mortals, cultivates, with easy pace
Of his own oxen, his paternal lands,
And every kind of usury withstands.
He neither is a'armed by horrid blast
Of trumpet, like a soldier, nor down-cast
Is he with dread of ocean's thundering rage;
Such cheerful, homely toil doth him engage,
He shuns alike the bar and proudest gates
Of citizens in power. And so he mates
The lofty poplars to the ready vine,
And, pruning useless boughs, ingrafts the fine
Young shoots with patient skill; or strolleth out
To view his lowing herds wandering about

IN PRAISE OF A COUNTRY LIFE

In lonely vales; or stores his honey, prest,
In new-made jars; or shears with keenest zest
His tender sheep. Or when the air is sweet
With scent of clover, and young lovers meet
Under a golden moon, and Autumn comes
Laden with mellow fruit to rural homes,
How doth his heart with gratitude run o'er
While gathering grafted pears, ripe to the core,
And grapes so luscious in their purple hue,
With which he may bring loving tribute due
To thee, O bounteous Priapus, and thee,
Sylvanus, guardian of the sacred tree !
Sometimes he lies, with hands beneath his head,
Under an aged elm, sometimes a bed
Of matted grass tempts him to dreamy ease:
The silent waters glide along; the bees

IN PRAISE OF A COUNTRY LIFE

Go droning by; the birds in leafy wold
Warble unseen; the fountains, bubbling cold
From secret springs mingle their murmuring fall
With music of the running streams; and all
Invite to gentle slumbers. But ere long
Comes winter with fierce rains and snows, and song
Is fled. And now he winds the hunting horn,
And with his dogs goes forth at early morn
To drive ferocious boars into the toils;
Or, being in the mood for trifling spoils,
He stretches with smooth pole his airy nets
To snare the greedy thrushes; or he gets
A timorous hare, or, rarest luck, a crane
Is caught within the trap,—amusing gain
For labours given. Pursuing joys like these,
Who will remember those anxieties

IN PRAISE OF A COUNTRY LIFE

Which are among the bitter-sweets of Love,
Whose flaming eyes have kindled gods above !
But if a faithful wife—a Sabine one
Or an Apulian tawny with the sun—
And healthy children greet him on his way
With warm embrace, and prattle of the day;
And the wide hearth is piled up with old wood,
The cattle housed and fed, and night's milk stood
To cool; and this year's wholesome wine is poured
Out of a seasoned cask, and on the board
Unbought abundance plies the appetite;
Not choicest Lucrine oysters could delight
Me more; nor turbot, nor the scar which thrives
In eastern floods, if wintry tempest drives
It to this sea, nor yet the turkey laved
In wine, nor Asiatic wild-fowl craved

IN PRAISE OF A COUNTRY LIFE

By epicures, tastes more agreeably,
Than olives gathered from the richest tree,
Or meadow-loving sorrel, or a dish
Of mallows, comforting to those who wish
For health, or spotless lamb slain at the feast
Of Terminus, or kid from wolf releast.
Amid these dainties, how it pleases one
To see the well-fed sheep, from distant run
Come trooping home ! To see the weary pair
Of oxen dragging the inverted share !
And slaves, the test of wealthy families,
Ranged round the smiling household deities !
Thrs, Alfius, the rich usurer, on the eve
Of turning countryman, of words took leave;
And getting in his money on the Ides,
At Calends puts it out—with more besides.

1904

TO APOLLO

O CÆSAR ! Lord and Ruler of the world !
The Poet kneels before the sacred fane,
That in thy palace, like a dream unfurl'd,
Foretells the glory of Apollo's reign.
What doth thy servant beg ? What fervent prayer
Leaps upward, while the red blood of the vine
He pours upon the holy altar there ?
As a first offering to the God divine—
Not the rich fruits of famed Sardinia's isle,
Not hot Calabria's goodly flocks and herds;
Not gold, or Indian ivory, or a pile
Of gems; nor other wealth the Earth affords.
O Cæsar ! These are not the Poet's needs.

TO APOLLO

Let those on whom blind Fortune hath bestowed
Calenian vineyard's, thick as common weeds,
Prune them with hookèd knives !—I love the road.
And let Sir Dives quaff from cups of gold
The costliest liquor Syrian bales may buy,
And thank th' Immorta! Gods for wealth untold !
The virtues of my farm with such may vie.
Me olives, succories, and mallows yield
A temperate sustenance and healthy cares.
O great Latona's son ! Thou God reveal'd
To all who hear the Music of the Spheres,
In daily toil ! Grant me true labour's ease,
With joy of life, and unimpaired mind,
And love of Poetry until my lease
Expires, and I fare onward with the wind !

1906

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

NOTES

(Biographical and Literary)

"BROOKFIELD," written to commemorate Robert Randall MacLeod, and the locality of which has long been familiar walking ground to me, deals with a few incidents which appealed to me as part of the poetry of life, and only briefly and in a very general way refers to MacLeod's influence upon the larger public whom he addressed in speeches and essays and books and in letters to the press.

Robert Randall MacLeod was the son of James MacLeod, and was born in Westfield, Queens County, Nova Scotia, August 16, 1841. When he was but a child, his parents removed to South Brookfield (about five miles from Westfield), and there he grew to manhood, and after various sojourns elsewhere made it his Nova Scotian home.

Brookfield was, indeed, his *alma mater*. The rocks and fields, the woods and lakes and streams of that lovely country-side were to him an early revelation, and no doubt, with the few books he found in the pioneer homes, deepened his religious emotions and turned his thoughts towards the ministry of God. He saved enough as a lumber hand in the woods to give him a year at Acadia in Wolfville, and then taught school and saved for Harvard Divinity School, where he graduated in due course. For several years he was the pastor of a Universalist Church in Maine. Later, he read law and was admitted to the bar, but seems not to have cared very much about the practice of the law. Perhaps he was not in harmony with the conventions of pulpit or bar. I cannot think of Emerson or Thoreau or Muir or Burroughs expressing their best save in "the temple not made with hands," and MacLeod was of their company.

In 1880, he, with his wife (who was Miss Agnes Swansburg, of Shelburne, Nova Scotia) and their only child (Crofton Uniacke), went to Mexico, where, for some years, he was in charge of mining interests. He returned to Brookfield in 1887, and called that place home for the rest of his life, though a few years before his death the winters were usually spent in Winthrop, Massachusetts. He died on the 12th of February,

APPENDIX

1909, in Winthrop, and was buried in Mount Auburn, that beautiful garden of the dead in Old Cambridge. A bronze tablet was erected to his memory by his friends, and a replica placed in the Town Hall at Liverpool, Nova Scotia, the shire town of his native county.

As to what MacLeod, himself, really was and what he accomplished besides getting a livelihood: He was first and always a minister of the tidings of God, revealed to him in the ways of nature and freedom of thought. To me he was an interpreter of the truth and beauty of life, a teacher who sought to save souls alive, a power for good and an example of greatness unto the people. When he died the press of Nova Scotia was full of eulogy for his worth, and the individual testimonies would make a respectable pamphlet. His delightful Nature Studies, his symphony of prose and poetry in Pinchurst, Markland, so rich in the wealth of the province, and his other multifarious writings, have enlarged Nova Scotia. The silence since his death is eloquent of the rarity of his genius. I am glad, however, to learn that at the request of Mr. W. C. Milner, Dominion Archivist in Halifax, MacLeod's literary remains have been placed in the archives.

Robert R. MacLeod was a very kind and helpful friend to me; and many radiant days and nights I spent with him and his family in their idyllic Brookfield home;—and that my love is more than art I know full well, else would I have longer delayed to follow the advice of *Paracelsus*, who sang to me, years ago:

"Waste not thy gifts
In profitless waiting for the gods' descent,
But have some idol of thine own to dress
With their array!"

—Abstract from manuscript,
Introduction to "BROOKFIELD."

NOTES TO THE MANUSCRIPT OF "BROOKFIELD"

The "poet" is John McPherson, an early Nova Scotian writer of verse. He was born at Liverpool, Nova Scotia, in 1817, and died at North Brookfield, in Queens County, in 1845. Consumption ended his short and tragic life. He was totally unfitted for the privations of a pioneer settlement. He tried school teaching and carpentering, and could not make a living—but he wrote some songs in his time of ill-health and despair, and died young. He was buried in a field near the Old Annapolis Road (from Liverpool to Annapolis by way of Nictaux), where it crosses

APPENDIX

the hill fronting Lake Tupper, just beyond the Collins' place. The only stone to his grave was a common roadside slate, on which his widow had carved with hammer and nail, "J. McPherson, 1845." This field, afterwards abandoned as a burial ground, grew up with woods, and was chopped over and finally used as a cattle pasture. The remains of the young poet had place there for sixty years, when the forlorn and lonely grave stirred MacLeod to collect a fund for a suitable monument. In 1906, McPherson's bones were transferred to the churchyard at North Brookfield, where a modest marble inscribed with his verse, and the old slate-stone, preserve to the community his almost forgotten name.

John McPherson's poems—the "Harp of Acadia"—were collected and edited, with a sympathetic memoir, in, 1862 by John S. Thompson, editor of the "Nova Scotian" and father of the fourth Premier of Canada. This book is now very rare.

It is pleasant to note that the memory of McPherson as a poet is honoured in Theodore H. Rand's "Treasury of Canadian Verse," published in 1910.

The "First Settler," or first white man, to explore and settle the northern district of Queens County was William Burke, in 1798. His log hut was nearly opposite the present residence of Primrose Smith, in South Brookfield. In 1898, MacLeod called a meeting of the district and arranged for a centenary festival. It was held in the summer of that year at South Brookfield, and was a happy success. (Much to my regret, I could not attend). MacLeod read an historical account of Burke and the settlement of the district, and the Attorney-General of Nova Scotia (now his Lordship Mr. Justice Longley) delivered an eloquent patriotic address. The proceeds of the festival were sufficient to erect a fine red granite shaft beside the graves of the "First Settler" and his wife, in the old burying ground set apart for the people of Brookfield.

The "love speech" referred to in stanza 22 was the recitation by MacLeod of Emerson's "Rhodora." I had never heard it before, and it opened my eyes to the beauty of the flower as it bloomed upon us in the old pasture.

APPENDIX

Stanza 25: MacLeod built himself a cabin retreat in a tree on the hill behind his house in Brookfield.

NOTE ON MY FATHER

James Noble Shannon Marshall, born in Newport, Nova Scotia, was the youngest of two children (sons) of the Rev. John Marshall, a Wesleyan missionary to Nova Scotia (born at Peterborough, England, in 1787, died at Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, in 1864) and his wife, Harriet Shannon, granddaughter of Cutts Shannon, a lawyer, of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and a niece of James Noble Shannon, who came to Nova Scotia after the expulsion of the Acadians and carried on an extensive business in Horton and Parrsboro. My father read law with his cousin, Hon. S. L. Shannon, Q.C., and was admitted to the bar and settled in Liverpool, Nova Scotia, in 1851, and practiced there forty-seven years. He was twice married: first, to my mother, by whom he had three children, a daughter and two sons, all living; and second, to Augusta Louisa Mack, with whom he had thirty-five years of happiness. She bore him ten children, seven of whom, five daughters and two sons, are living. The rearing of such a large family upon the proceeds of law practice in a small country town was, I think, enough life-work for any man of fair intelligence. After a lingering illness of two years, my father died in 1898.

MY MOTHER

Adelaide Amelia Allison was born at Willow Bank Farm, Cornwallis. She was one of several daughters of William Edward Allison, a grandson of Joseph and Alice Allison, first settlers of that family name in Nova Scotia. I was baptized at her bedside, being only three weeks old when she died. She was very fair and small and slight. Her hair, of which I have seen a treasured braid, was a pale, golden

"Yellow like ripe corn";

and there was an indefinable, tender radiance about it, as of a lingering memory of happiness. Those who knew her said "she was an angel on earth."

APPENDIX

MY FOSTER-MOTHER

Her maiden name was Page. She lost her husband (a sea-captain) and her son by the same shipwreck, in 1849, and thus was left all alone. In later years, she lived with me and died at my home in Bridgewater, and was buried in Trinity churchyard. A modest stone marks the grave of this woman whose mother-love for me was wondrous, and whom I loved with the love of a son.

The words, "my mother," in "THE HEART'S CALL" refer to my foster-mother.

NOTE ON THE SONNET GIVEN BELOW

I print this beautiful fancy in verse, because the authoress seemed pleased that it delighted me, notwithstanding my unworthiness. Being only an occasional writer (as a glance over this volume will show) and my flights being seldom far above the hills of life, I am not a bard. The spirit in which the sonnet was written is, however, as sincere as if the fancies were true; hence I am proud to recognize this, to me, unprecedented honour.

TO WM. E. MARSHALL

Marshall ! Thou purest bard with heart serene,
'Tis not a height thy spirit is contending,
For poised, thy soul dost view great love unending,
As 'mong the stars thy hallowed dreams convene
Thy fellow bards. With silvern voice terrene
Thou hail'st our love, as earthward thou art bending,
To farther joy, as heavenward we are wending;
From sorrow's chill, thy tenderness would wean.
Religio grammatici is thine,
O, classic bard, steeped in Hymettic dews;
"Gold dusty" thou, but jewelled dust divine
Illumes thy gentle progress 'mid the ~~stone~~, ^{sculpture}
And through thy useful pilgrimage on earth
Is 'twined the song that Love Divine is ours.

GRACE N. MOORE.

Charleston, Nova Scotia,
May 6, 1919.